

# **FIFTH WORLD CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL**

**Abridged Report of  
Meetings held at  
Moscow June 17<sup>th</sup>  
to July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1924**

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## NOTE

**In compiling this abridged report of the Fifth Congress of the Communist International we have aimed at giving the substance of the proceedings and as much possible of the speeches delivered in their original form. The resolutions and theses of the Congress are published separately in the COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL No. 7 (New Series), English Edition, and should be read in conjunction with this Report.**

**ON BEHALF OF COMINTERN PUBLICATIONS  
COMMITTEE**

***J.T.M***

## Opening Session, June 17, 1924

The first session of the Fifth Congress of the Communist International was held in the Grand Theatre, Moscow, jointly with representatives of the workers, Red Army and Navy, Young Communists and Pioneers. Numerous delegations from factories came to greet the Congress,

Comrade Kolarov was in the Chair.

Comrade Milutin, in the name of all the delegations, proposed the following comrades for the Presidium of the Congress: Comrade Zinoviev, Chairman; Clara Zetkin; Comrades Stalin, Bukharin, Trotsky (Russia); Braun, Gebhardt (Germany); Treint, Sellier (France); Bordiga (Italy); Smeral, Muna (Czecho Slovakia); Kolarov (Balkans); Kraevsky (Poland); Katayama (Japan)—(a voice: Long live the peoples of the East)—Roy (India); Stewart (Great Britain); Dunne (America). Secretariat: Piatnitsky, MacManus, Neurath, Doriot, Stirner, (Applause.) The Presidium and the Secretariat were approved unanimously.

The Chair then called upon Comrade Zinoviev to make the opening speech of the Congress.

Zinoviev (who was greeted with loud applause): At the Fifth World Congress of the Communist International we shall have to deal with the question of the programme of the Communist International. It is a difficult matter to create a programme which will satisfy all the requirements of the movement and which will correspond with our theory. We, however, have two names which completely express the programme of the Communist International: Marx and Lenin, It was under the banner of Marx that the Comintern was called into existence and under the leadership of Lenin that the

Comintern fought and built up its organisations. I believe, comrades, that our Congress can have no greater honour than to recognise that it is our duty to follow that path which Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin has pointed out for the world proletariat and for the international revolution. When Marx died, Engels wrote that the proletariat had lost that centre to which French, Russians, Americans, and Germans in critical moments had turned for counsel and aid. Vladimir Ilyitch after his death left such, a centre to which, the proletariat of all countries may turn for counsel and assistance. The centre is here; the centre is the Communist International. Our Fifth Congress will prove to the world that the greatest leader of International socialism has not worked among us in vain.

We must first of all remember the victims of our International movement. We send our warmest greetings to those who took part in the Cracow uprising, to the Polish workers and peasants; to those on whom the White Guard are now wreaking their vengeance; to the rebellious workers and peasant of Bulgaria, who are languishing in prison and in exile; we remember the thousands of German workers who, with the aid of the White social-democrats, have been flung into jails; the Indian imprisonment; and the Communist Party of Egypt, which after an attempt to occupy factories, was obliged to suffer defeat. Above all we remember the sacrifices made by the youth movement. Recently Comrade Engel was shot in Poland and young workers of Poland have within the last few weeks received sentences of imprisonment amounting together to five hundred years. We recall the heroic work of the young French and German workers in the Ruhr. The Communist International will support the youth movement with every means at its disposal, since there is no more promising revolutionary movement than our excellent International Youth.

Events have not developed with quite the speed we



expected. But on the other hand there is no need for us to hang our heads when we look back upon the path we have traversed. After five years of existence we have a half-dozen overthrown emperor's thrones and we have conquered a sixth-part of the globe. During this period the Second International has for a second time come into power, but wherever it has come into power it has become the defender of the cause of the bourgeoisie.

Many of our parties have in this period passed through the fiery test of illegality and have become steeled and strengthened in the process.

We are opening our Congress just prior to the tenth anniversary of the war. We want to organise an international demonstration week against the war at the end of July and the beginning of August, not only against the bourgeoisie but also against White social democrats who are no less responsible for the war than the bourgeoisie. If there are moments when we must, more than any other time, emphasize the fact that the social democrats are our deadly enemies, it is particularly so on the tenth anniversary of the war.

The Second International is at present occupying itself with the Experts' Report, and Crispin has immortalised his name by the phrase that the Experts' Report means the capitulation of the bourgeoisie before Marxism. These smug follows apparently confused Karl Marx with the present German Prime Minister, Marx. The question of world war cannot be removed from the agenda as long as these traitors exercise influence over the masses. We shall never forget how these gentlemen behaved at the outbreak of the war. We shall not forget the 13,000,000 dead, the 10,000,000 cripples, and the 20,000,000 wounded of the world war, for which they are responsible.

It will be the task of our Congress to discuss a number of important questions. An estimate of the events in Germany will be of great significance for the fate of the Communist

International and of our tactics. The “Labour Government” in Britain and our attitude towards it; the “left bloc” in Germany and the tasks of the French Communist Party; the lessons to be deduced from Bulgaria; the Italian policy; our Russian discussion, which has stirred a number of parties; the tactics of the united front and the labour movement;—all those questions await the answer of our Congress.

We shall have to discuss a number of important problems of the international trade union movement and our tasks in Germany, Britain, France, Poland, Scandinavia, and in the Balkans. We shall have to judge the results of our new economic policy. Such are the tasks facing us and I believe that we are all moved by the desire to solve them in the spirit of the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

Comrade Rykov greeted the Congress in the name of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. He declared that during the period since the Fourth Congress the sections of the Communist International have become real mass parties. On the other hand, this period was characterised by the fact that the support given to the bourgeoisie by the Second International had become more open and legal. Since the Fourth Congress the Soviet Union had been organised. The death of Lenin had been a severe blow for the whole of the Communist International. The period since the death of Lenin was one in which the Party masses have been rallied within the Russian Communist Party and the non-party masses around the Party. The discussion within the Communist Party ended with the unanimous resolution of the 755 delegates at the 13th Party Congress of the Russian Communist Party. The Lenin Enrolment proves that in the Russian Communist Party the Comintern possesses its best vanguard. The accumulation of revolutionary energy within the Comintern is proceeding with satisfactory speed. This fact gives the Soviet Union every assurance that the Russian workers and peasants can carry on

until the world revolution.

Comrade Lozovsky greeted the Congress in the name of the Red International of Labour Unions and the trade unions of the Soviet Union. He referred to the case of Thomas. The correspondent of a Russian trade union paper asked Thomas what was his opinion of the colonial question, to which Thomas replied that on this subject he had no opinion. That, however, is in itself a quite definite opinion. At the last German party congress Hilferding said that one must not be carried away by the revolutionary romance of the East, but must hold fast to the sober realities of the West. But apart from world revolution there is no salvation for toiling humanity and the exploited peoples of the East. Amid the loud applause, the speaker ended by calling for the world revolution.

The session was closed with the singing of the Internationale.



## **Second Session, June 18th**

**CHAIRMAN, COMRADE KOLAROV**

**SPEAKER, COMRADE KALININ**

**SUBJECT: "LENIN AND THE COMINTERN"**

Comrade Kolarov opened the session at six o'clock and informed the Congress that the Moscow workers had already assembled on the Red Square and that therefore the reports on the first point on the agenda "Lenin and the Comintern," would be delivered from the Lenin Mausoleum.

The delegates marched to the Red Square led by a band of the Red Army, where already thousands of Moscow workers, delegated by the factories, with bands and innumerable red banners, had assembled in order to hear the report on "Lenin and the Comintern." Arrived at the grave of Comrade Lenin, the delegates to the Congress filed past the bier of our dead leader. The delegates from 52 countries, from all parts of the globe, many of whom had seen him last in Zimmerwald and Kienthal, many who had seen him at the height of his work, and many who saw him now for the first time lying embalmed on the bier, gazed at Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin. He lay in the coffin, his face pale, but almost unchanged, as though he only slept. It was a mournful and yet noble sight, the mortal shell of the man who had given the greatest to mankind.

The Presidium of the Congress then mounted the Mausoleum tribune. Comrade Kolarov called upon Kalinin to report upon

## LENIN AND THE COMINTERN.

**Comrade Kalinin:** Comrades, long before the Congress everyone of you knew that the first word at the Congress would be devoted to the leader of the Russian Revolution and of the Communist International. The study of Leninism in all its phases is one of the most important tasks of the international proletariat. His teachings have enriched not only the Russian Bolsheviks but also the Communist Parties of the whole world with a great experience, from which we shall be able, for many years to come, to derive our replies to the most complicated questions.

The three main ideas of Lenin are: *the alliance of the workers with the peasants, the national question, and the dictatorship of the proletariat*. The idea of the alliance between the workers and the peasants occupied him from the earliest days of his activities. He put the question in such a way that every mujik could understand it.

Closely connected with the peasant question is the national question, to which Lenin also devoted the greatest attention. The population of the Soviet Union is comprised of many nationalities at various cultural levels. The national question is therefore an urgent question for the Soviet Union. Lenin on this question carried on a bitter fight against all deviations.

When applying these three ideas of Lenin, we must always remember that they are weapons in our revolutionary struggle. It is your duty, the duty of the disciples of Lenin, not only to preserve these specific weapons of Leninism in the fight for the emancipation of the proletariat, but to harden them and sharpen them still more.

**Comrade Ruth Fischer (Germany):** The first word of the Fifth Congress must be dedicated to the memory of Lenin, the creator of the Russian Communist Party, the creator of Soviet

Russia. His work has not only taken root in the masses of the workers and peasants of Russia—he is the symbol of world revolution in every country; he is especially the symbol of revolution for the German proletariat. The German Communist Party knows that it can triumph only under the banner of Lenin. The thought of Lenin has taken deep root in the German working class, it is trying to create memorials to Lenin. Where the communists have the majority the towns are being renamed after Lenin. A town in the heart of the Upper Silesian coal and industrial area, which is named after the mass murderer of the world war, Hindenburg, has now a communist majority. Our comrades have decided to change Hindenburg into Leninburg. This has enraged the bourgeoisie and they know that they have no more dangerous enemy than the Communist Party, which, under the banner of Leninism, will triumph. The Third International was founded by Lenin and in spite of all difficulties, it will force its path from Russia through Europe and through the whole world. Under the symbol of Lenin, we shall defeat the bourgeoisie of the whole world and the red flag will fly not only over Moscow but over Berlin and over the whole globe. Leninism will bring the victory of the world revolution! (*Applause.*)

**Comrade Roy:** On this day, the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat of the world are assembled here, in the heart of the world revolution, in order to bring you the greetings of the exploited of all countries, we must remember that this is the first World Congress of the Communist International which is taking place without our beloved comrade Lenin. Lenin, indeed, is dead, but he has left behind him a compact army, an army of steel, which under the banner of Leninism will triumph. It was Lenin who created a real international. It was Lenin who was able to rally round himself not only the proletariat of Europe and America but also the

oppressed and exploited of the colonies and semi-colonies. We know that world revolution will triumph only under the banner of Leninism. (Long live Leninism!) (Applause.)

The session closed with this speech. Led by the Congress Presidium, the delegates marched past the workers' deputations amid the greatest enthusiasm, which increased when the crowd recognised Comrade Zinoviev and Trotsky, who received a great ovation.



## Third Session, June 19th

**CHAIRMAN: GEBHARDT.**

**SPEAKER: ZINOVIEV.**

**Subject: REPORT OF E.C.C.I.**

The Session was opened by Comrade Gebhardt (Germany).  
The Agenda. was as follows:—

1. Endorsement of the Agenda. of the Congress.
2. Rules of procedure at the Congress.
3. Endorsement of the Credentials Committee.
4. Endorsement of the Commissions.
5. Report for the Executive Committee (Comrade Zinoviev):

A motion by the Dutch Delegation to elect Comrade Wynkoop to the Presidium was carried.

The Agenda of the Congress was accepted in the form decided upon by the Enlarged Executive.

After the rules of the procedure had been agreed to, the following were elected to the Credentials Committee:—

Piatnitsky, Trilesser, Kreibich, Valetsky, Amter, Terracini, Dimitrov, Maranne, Petrov, Gebhardt, Stewart, Scheflo, Unger.

The Congress then appointed the various commissions.

It was decided to extend the Agenda in order to give Comrade Ryazanov the opportunity to report on recently discovered ad hitherto unpublished manuscripts by Marx and Engels.

This preliminary business being finished, Comrade Gebhardt called on Comrade Zinoviev to deliver the Executive report. Comrade Zinoviev was enthusiastically cheered by the delegates on his appearance upon the platform. The delegates rose from their seats, singing the International.

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## **POLICY OF COMINTERN UNTIL FIFTH CONGRESS.**

### **Our Forces.**

Comrades, at this Congress we have to outline our future path, but first of all I would like to examine the path which we have hitherto pursued, We must do this, first of all, because, for the first time we have to pursue our work in the International Congress without the leadership and influence of Comrade Lenin; secondly, because in many respects the international situation has now almost completely changed; thirdly, because we are, in a way, holding a jubilee Congress.

Recently we have celebrated the Fifth Anniversary of the Communist International. Four world-congresses lie behind us, and they mark four stages in the history of the international revolutionary working class movement. Permit me therefore, to make a short historical review of the development of the Communist International. I shall examine this history from two points of view.

revolutionaries who have recently been sentenced to long terms of

Firstly: our strength at the beginning of the Communist International and the extent we have grown during these years.

Secondly: the conflict of tendencies inside the Communist International and the review of these conflicts of tendencies at the four world congresses hitherto held.

### **From a Propagandist Society into a Party.**

First of all, we must compare our present numerical strength with what it has been hitherto. I think it is quite clear

by now that the Communist International, in its earliest years, in a number of countries, was only a society for the propaganda of communism without being aware of it, itself. At the beginning, we thought we were very strong, but as a matter of fact in a number of countries at that time we did not have Communist Parties, but only great propaganda societies. Whence came this optical illusion! It arose from the fact that the discontent of the masses, at the end of the imperialist war, was very great, and we took this seething discontent for an organised communist force. But it was not really so. The example of our German brother-party will suffice to illustrate this.

After the First Congress, during the January rising of the Spartacists, we believed that our German Party was a very great force. The discontent of the masses was very great. Their hostility to the, bourgeoisie, and partly also to the social democrats, was intense. We communists thought we were the vanguard of this great movement. If we now look back upon these events, we see them quite clearly. The Spartacus rising was one of the most glorious struggles of the working class. But what actually was our Party? It was still very small, it was a great propaganda society of communism which was only at the beginning of the process of winning over the masses. And it was so equally in other countries, In order therefore, to have a clear standard, by which to gauge our present position, we must not overlook the facts which I have mentioned. In spite of all weaknesses, in spite of all the shortcomings of our sections, we are now no propaganda societies, but we have grown into a Communist Party, and in part, even into a communist mass-Party.

### **Struggle of Tendencies.**

Now let us consider the question of the struggle of

tendencies inside the Communist International. Several things have to be cleared up in order to correctly understand the conflict of tendencies which, at this Fifth Congress it will be difficult for us to avoid. As far as the programme side of the question is concerned, I am in agreement with what is said in the instructions of the Communist Party of Germany to its delegation to the Fifth Congress. I believe this document is generally known. This document appears to me, in the main to be acceptable to all of us, and will help us to arrive at the decisions we have to take here.

### **Bedrock of the Comintern.**

The German Communist Party observes six important programme documents in our five years of activity, which, so to speak forms the bedrock of the Communist International. These are: the theses on dictatorship and democracy, which Comrade Lenin presented to the First Congress; Lenin's theses on the agrarian and national questions, adopted by the Second Congress; then there are the 21 points; the resolution of the Second Congress on the formation of Soviets: the conditions under which workers' councils may be established, and their historical role.

All these theses were not accepted by the Communist International without a struggle. But there has been far more controversy over questions of a purely tactical nature.

That Bolshevism was born of the struggle against opportunism, against the right wing, against the social democrats, and against the *centrists*, is generally known, and does not need proving here. The Communist International very largely came from the Second International.

## **Legacy of the Past.**

Bolshevism had to conduct great struggles against other digressions, frequently described as “left” or “ultra-left.” It is self evident that they are not “left.” There is nothing more “left” than Leninism, than revolutionary Marxism.

It is customary to describe these digressions as “left.” Bolshevism fought against these “left” digressions before the revolution; in the Communist International itself, its founder and leader Lenin carried on great struggles against these digressions on an international scale, as the Executive Council has to do now.

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## **FOUR CONGRESSES OF THE COMINTERN.**

### **First Congress**

The First Congress took place at a moment when the rejoicing over the victory of the Russian Revolution was still fresh, and when the defeat and its significance of the Spartacus rising in Germany was still not clear to us. The first inaugural congress passed without any great internal struggle. As far as I remember, we had only one disagreement; it was over the question as to whether or not the International should be established at that congress. The representative of the German Communist Party was against its immediate establishment. During the Second Congress we already had a clear and definite struggle of tendencies. We began the fight first of all against the right. You will remember the 21 points which were to be the bulwark against centrism. Already at that time Lenin and the comrades who supported him, were obliged to carry on a struggle even against the “left,” on the question of

parliamentarism. A section of the comrades took sides against making use of parliament, and among them was Comrade Bordiga.

### **Second Congress.**

Further, at the Second Congress there was a struggle over the question of the trade unions. Some American (the late John Reed) and German comrades demanded the withdrawal from the social democratic trade unions, and Comrade Lenin carried on a stern struggle on this point. There was also a struggle at the Second Congress against the Communist Labour Party of Germany: Several ultra-left “syndicalists declared: “We do not need a party, at least not until after the revolution.”

There were also differences of opinions on the questions as to whether the English comrades should affiliate to the Labour Party. You will remember that many comrades were opposed to this course—not only the English. Thus, for instance, Comrade Wynkoop, who is with us to-day, on that occasion fought like a lion against the English communists joining the Labour Party. He regarded it as opportunism. Well, time passes and men change. Nowadays, Comrade Wynkoop is accused of other digressions, not towards the “left.” We shall see later to what extent these changes are justified. All this shows, comrades, that the struggle of tendencies within the Communist International from the beginning has been rather severe.

### **Third Congress.**

The third stage is the Third Congress. You will remember the struggle against the so-called theory of the offensive, after the, March rising, in Germany That was represented as a fight against revolutionary tendencies. As a matter of fact it was not

a fight against the “lefts,” but against “left digressions.” This struggle was also carried on by Lenin, and represents one of the most important moments in the history of the Communist International. An equally severe struggle was conducted at that time against Levi (who was expelled at the Third Congress), against the opportunist tendencies in the then Italian movement; but at the same time, there was also a struggle against Terracini, Bordiga, and against several comrades who are now on the so-called extreme left. We may say that, at the Third Congress, Comrade Lenin defeated in advance the present political position of Comrade Bordiga.

### **Fourth Congress.**

Finally there was the Fourth Congress. The Fourth Congress is still in your memories and I need not dwell on its work in detail. The slogan of the “workers’ government” was adopted, the tactics of the united front were approved, and at the same time the Rome “left” theses of the Italians, with which we shall not have to deal here, were severely criticised and rejected. You thus see, comrades, that from the beginning, the Communist International, in order to remain Marxist, or Leninist—as we should say—has carried on the severest struggles against the centrists and opportunists, and at the same time, has fought back the extreme left digressions.

### **Complete Leninism.**

Therefore, we cannot be said to be lacking in principle because we combat also the ultra-left digressions; it should rather be taken as the said: “I am a Marxian, I accept Marxism, but I draw the line at the things which Marx wrote against Proudhonism” which, as you know, was also an extremely “left” digression from Marxism. But Marxism without

combating Proudhonism is not Marxism at all.

Therefore we will continue our course, whatever may be said about us, and in spite of the outcry about our alleged lack of principle. This is the application of the tactics of Marxism, and consequently of Leninism, in the present conditions.

### **What Comrade Lenin has Taught.**

At this juncture I would like to quote a passage from one of the most brilliant articles Comrade Lenin ever wrote; from his article "The importance of gold before and after the establishment of socialism," which I consider to be one of the most important revolutionary contributions of Lenin. In this article he says:—

"The supreme danger, and perhaps the only danger, to a true revolutionary is to exaggerate the revolutionary situation, as well as to forget about the limits and conditions for the appropriate and successful application of revolutionary methods. True revolutionaries have frequently come to grief by writing the word revolution in large letters, and by making a fetish of "Revolution," thus losing their heads and the ability to weigh the circumstances calmly and soberly, and to discriminate between the moment when one has to act in a revolutionary manner and the moment in which one has to proceed in a reformist fashion.

"True revolutionaries will certainly go under (not as a result of external defeat, but as a result of the internal collapse of their cause) if they lose their sangfroid and imagine that the "great" victorious world revolution can and must solve all problems in all circumstances of time and place, exclusively in the revolutionary manner."

You will observe, comrades, that Lenin even wrote of the admissibility of reformist action. He must have used the word advisedly in order to bring out his idea in greater relief, but, of

course, there was no question of a system of reformist action—or of reformist theory as opposed to Marxism: the word “reformist” was employed in order to emphasise the principle idea and even to tease the “ultra left.”

Thus, in order to wage a correct and successful fight against the right tendencies, which are still prevalent in our movement, we must remember, the things which our great teacher and leader has taught us in the past, both when Bolshevism was yet confined to Russia, and when it became an international movement.

We shall now deal with the period between the Fourth and Fifth Congresses, which was marked by very heated debates among the various tendencies. I shall try to indicate the more important questions of principle with which we had to deal during this period.

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## **FROM FOURTH CONGRESS TO FIFTH CONGRESS.**

### **Fight against Frossard.**

Immediately after the Fourth Congress, the fight commenced against Frossard in France. This chapter, as you know, has now been closed. We can now render to Frossard our thanks, on behalf of the French Party and of the International, for his conduct. Frossard acted like a plaster which has withdrawn the puss from the sores on the body of the Communist Party in France, thus healing it.

The second fight which led to a split, was the fight against the Norwegian Labour Party. The latter was an outspoken semi-reformist, semi-right syndicalist party. It is quite clear



that Lian, one of the leaders of the Party and the chairman of the Trade Union Federation, is the most vulgar social traitor. This will surely be admitted now, even by Comrade Hoeglund.

### **Fight against “Right” Errors.**

In Italy, too, we had to fight against the leaders of the “right” Socialist Party.

The Executive had also to rectify the right tendencies of the Swedish Party. It is as yet early to judge the extent to which this work has been successful.

Next comes the Bulgarian events which also revealed right-wing digressions. I must emphasise the fact that these “right” aberrations, viewed from international aspect, represent phenomena of the most diversified character. They were connected with the traditions and culture of the movement of each given country. In Bulgaria the situation was quite different to that in Sweden, and in Great Britain it was utterly different from that in Norway; in Russia (opposition), different to France etc. Nevertheless, all these tendencies deserve to be called “right” tendencies. You know the decisions of the Executive on the Bulgarian question. We believe that the best leaders of the Bulgarian Party have acknowledged that the Executive was right. The Bulgarian Party has already made good in many ways.

### **The German Communist Party.**

Then comes the German Party. Here, too, we had to fight the “right.” It has been said for instance, in the Czech press, that the Executive Committee has removed all the old heads of the German Party. The Executive Committee cannot claim all the credit for this service. We supported the former Executive Committee far too long, for reasons with which we shall deal

later on. The Executive had to fight in Germany against “right tendencies.”

### **The Discussion In the Russian Party.**

Then comes the Russian Party discussion, which was of great international significance (with which the Congress will deal in detail later on.)

The Russian Party has branded these digressions as petty-bourgeois digressions. These digressions differed considerably from those in other countries. They have a great international significance. I have before me an article published in the Scheidemann *Vorwärts* on the Russian Party Congress, which asks:

“What has become of the opposition, which only six months ago was so much talked about and which gave rise to so many hopes?”

Whose hopes were raised by the opposition? It turns out that it was the German counter-revolutionary Social-Democrats. Most of these hopes were not fulfilled, and I hope they will never be fulfilled. (Applause.) It has come to such a pass that this same *Vorwärts* in the same number devotes a whole article to Comrade Radek, in which it is said that Radek differs from the other leaders of the Communist International by his clear and sane appreciation of things, etc. I do not mean that in this question Comrade Radek has earned the praise of the Social-Democratic *Vorwärts*, still to a certain extent he deserved it. And if hitherto, Comrade Radek has not had a clear notion of the whole situation. I believe that this article will make him, as an experienced politician, think furiously. He will surely want to know why the *Vorwärts* considers him to be clear-headed and sane politician.

## **The “Right” Digression in the French Communist Party.**

Unfortunately, the Executive also had to contend against a new “right” in the French movement. I have already said that Frossard acted like a plaster which drew out of the Party all that was unhealthy in it. It would be perhaps more cautious on my part to say, almost all.

Some of these “right” tendencies are of a dangerous nature. Loebe recently delivered a speech in the Reichstag in which he said:

“The British Labour Government and the left bloc in France inaugurate to a new era in the history of the world, which will bring peace to humanity, etc.”

This is an indication that Democratic-pacifist views will make their appearance also among the Social-Democratic masses of Germany. This, of course, is not so bad when it comes from Loebe. But when Comrade Rosmer writes in almost the same strain on behalf of the French Party, he unfortunately makes himself the mouthpiece of pacifist and Democratic illusions. Thus we have a “right” in the French Party. Fortunately, it is not very numerous, and I hope that it will not be long lived. I believe it will be as short-lived as the Marsal Cabinet, which, as you know, was very puny and soon died. The Executive will do its part in preventing the formation of such a “right” which is represented by some comrades, as for instance by Comrade Souvarin who, the more he talks, the more he contradicts himself—generally speaking, Comrade Souvarin’s worst enemy is Souvarin himself—and also by Comrade Rosmer and Monat from whom better things were expected. The French Party as a whole has fought strongly and quite properly against this tendency.

### **Digressions in the American Movement.**

We must also combat some digressions to the right in the American movement; these digressions made their appearance in connection with the Third Party, the La Follette Party; the tendency to form a common election platform with this petty-bourgeois movement. This was a difficult problem because the movement in America is rather backward and even the elementary idea of an independent Labour Party is new. The average worker in America still votes for bourgeois parties, for he still hopes eventually to become an “independent” employer himself. It was not by any means an easy matter to come to a decision. Nevertheless, the Executive Committee decided to oppose these tactics, and as events have shown we were, quite right.

There were also tendencies to the “right” in the English Party. I drew up a memorandum two or three months before the Fifth Congress in which we warned the Party that it was making grave mistakes in the way it was carrying out the policy of the United Front. We agreed with what the German comrades have said about this in their instructions to their delegation.

### **Fight against “Ultra-Lefts” and Theoretic Revisionism.**

You see, therefore, that the Executive has combated the “right” in all its various forms. At the same time we have had to combat certain tendencies of the “extreme left.”

With regard to the German Party, there have been moments when we have been in a very pessimistic mood. You are already familiar with the two letters of the Executive. We feared that on the trade union question the German comrades would succumb to the “new tactics.” This might have caused

much harm. We were right to oppose these digressions to the “left” and we did so with considerable success. At one moment, . not only the “left,” but even the “centre” and several members of the “right” declared that the exit from the trade unions was inevitable. I cannot speak with certainty of the “right” but I can assert this definitely of the “centre.” Two influential comrades from the “centre” came to Moscow and implored us not to oppose the “left” on this question, because, they said, the whole of the German workers were in favour of leaving the trade unions. They said that this movement was almost a “natural force.” Nevertheless, we did oppose it, and successfully.

Comrade Graziadei, in Italy, published a book containing a reprint of the articles he wrote, when he was a Social-Democratic revisionist, attacking Marxism. This theoretical revisionism cannot be allowed to pass with impunity. Neither will we tolerate our Hungarian Comrade Lukacs, doing the same in the domain of philosophy and sociology. I have received a letter from Comrade Rudas, one of the leaders of this fraction. He explains that he intended to oppose Lukacs, but the fraction forbade him to do so; thereupon he left the fraction because he could not see Marxism watered down. Well done, Rudas! We have a similar tendency in the German Party. Comrade Graziadei is a professor, Korsch is also a professor—(Interruptions: “Lukacs is also a professor!”). If we got a few more of these professors spinning out their Marxist theories, we shall be lost. We cannot tolerate such theoretical revisionism of this kind in our Communist International.

### **“Right Danger” Should not be Under-estimated.**

Now, comrades; as I have said, 90 per cent. of our battles this year have been against digressions to the right. I think this

will also be the case at the present Congress. I admit at once that the more one studies the documents of our brother parties the more one sees that dangers from the “right” cannot be under-estimated, that they are greater than any of us imagined. This is not because our people are bad, but it arises from the features of the present period of world history. Just now we are in the trough of two great waves of revolution, and in such a period, dangers of “right” digressions are inevitable. The survivals of Social-Democracy are more prevalent in our camp than we ever realised. We must and we shall eradicate them, but we shall succeed in this only if we make absolutely no concessions to wordy radicalism and “theoretical” revisionism; and if we immediately suppress deliberate extreme left digressions, the very moment they acquire any importance.

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## **SITUATION AT FIFTH CONGRESS.**

### **Do We Make Slow Progress?**

What is the situation now, at the moment of the opening of the Fifth Congress. Many think events are not moving fast enough. We are all dissatisfied, victory has not come: everything is proceeding far too slowly. We expected the German Revolution: it failed to come. Sometimes one gets the feeling that it is a wretchedly slow process. Certainly, from the standpoint of our subjective feelings, it is very slow; for we must wait for the termination of the MacDonald period in England, of the Left Bloc in France, and of the present events in Germany.

It would really be delightful to be marching forward at a

rapid pace. But objectively speaking, I believe that the march of events really is not so slow. It is said that when a fly is sitting on a large mill-wheel and the wheel is turning very rapidly, the fly feels as though the wheel is standing still. The same is true with us. The wheel of world history is turning very rapidly.

### **Results of Five Years.**

The results of these five years may be summed as follows:

1. A half dozen monarchies have been overthrown; one of which is the Russian monarchy. That certainly is something. (Hear, hear!) The overthrow of Russian Czarism is of great significance for the world revolution.

2. We have conquered a sixth of the surface of the globe. Five-sixths remain to be won, it is true, but we have already won and consolidated one-sixth.

3. Development in Asia and in other remote regions was greatly stimulated by the war.

4. Capitalism in the more developed countries has been shaken and partly disorganised.

5. The Labour aristocracy, the petty bourgeoisie as represented by the Social-Democracy, has become a necessary component part of bourgeois government. This marks an advance. Certainly they are counter-revolutionary and traitors, but objectively speaking, it is a step in advance because it is a symptom of the decay of the bourgeoisie.

6. The Communist Parties have grown. We are no longer a mere propagandist society: we are developing into a Communist world party.

This balance is rather meagre, it is true. We expected more: but it is not quite as bad as one is inclined to imagine.

During the past year the movement flared up in Bulgaria,

in Germany, and in Poland, It is perfectly clear that it was no mere accident, but a symptom that we were between two waves of the revolution. In general, during this year, many events occurred in International politics and in the International Labour movement; a Labour Government in Great Britain; elections in Germany, France and Italy; a Labour Government in Denmark; vigorous development of the petty bourgeois movement in America; a strike in Norway lasting half a year; dissolution of the Two and a Half International; the International Conference of Transport Workers, a strike wave in Great Britain in railway strike in China; a strike of 150,000 textile workers in India, etc. Thus important events took place. We have not yet obtained a complete victory, but we are moving forward.

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## **ECONOMIC WORLD SITUATION.**

### **Decay of Capitalism Continues.**

I now come to the World economic situation. We will hear a special report on this subject by Comrade Varga. As far as I can see, I believe that Comrade Varga's estimate is correct.

No one has proved that there is anything wrong in his theses. The estimate is correct, and what is this estimate? The Third and Fourth Congresses discussed this matter. Very little need be changed therein. Capitalism is still in the period of decline. A new economic crisis is beginning in America; there is a world agrarian crisis. In some countries there is a partial revival mainly at the expense of other countries. The Social-Democrats consider that the situation is becoming normal.



Hilferding is triumphant. He says that we are now approaching a new period of stability. In the magazine *Die Gesselluchafft*, he claims that things will become normal as soon as stability has been restored in Central Europe. Only this “petty detail” is missing—this stability cannot be obtained. This stability exists only in Soviet Russia, in which, he says, the situation is not normal.

If this is “normalcy”—that the currency in Germany, in Austria, and in Poland has collapsed, recovered, but must undoubtedly collapse again—if that is normal—you may have your normalcy with pleasure. If what is happening to the French franc is normal, we hope “normalcy” will continue. If it is normal that an agrarian crisis has gripped the whole world, that 40 per cent. of the farmers in America are facing poverty, if it is normal to have now about 7 millions of unemployed—if that is normal, then this “normalcy” merely confirms the extent of the crisis now prevailing in the bourgeois world.

We know very well that the class struggle is growing more acute: that the standard of wages for the working class is continually falling—in Germany, 20 per cent. to 40 per cent. lower than in 1923—that the working week far exceeds 48 hours, that even in England the real wages often amount only to 75 per cent. of pre-war wages; that in France, where there is no unemployment, where there is a great amount of immigration, the cost of living has risen much more than the increase in wages; that in Germany, Austria, Hungary, and a number of other countries, the real wages amount to only 50 per cent. to 75 per cent. of the pre-war wages. Thus, not only relatively, but absolutely speaking, the condition of the working class is continually getting worse.

Therefore, we must declare that although events are not moving as rapidly as we thought they would, the period of crisis, the period of decline and fall, is continuing. In the political field this is more evident than in the economic field,

because the political field is a more sensitive barometer than the economic field. A stabilisation of the world economic situation is out of the question. The bourgeoisie takes a gloomier view of the situation than the Social-Democrats—these lackeys of the bourgeoisie—because the bourgeoisie is much closer to economic realities. There is no occasion for us to revise our opinion in this matter, as expressed in the resolution of the Third and Fourth Congresses.

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## **INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SITUATION.**

### **New Pacifist Phase.**

The world political situation. Here, comrades, we are facing a somewhat new situation. A new phase has set in. We foretold this phase in the revolution of the Fourth Congress—the so-called “Democratic pacifist” phase. In the resolution of the Fourth Congress we said:

“The characteristics of the international political situation at this moment are fascism, martial law, and the growing wave of white terror against the working class. But that does not exclude the possibility that in the near future, in very important countries, open bourgeois reaction will be replaced by a “Democratic-pacifist” era.

That was written in 1922.

### **Period of New Illusions.**

Hence, when martial law prevailed, we foretold the coming of

the Democratic-pacifist era. I believe we must now do exactly the reverse: during the “Democratic-pacifist” era we must foresee the return of the period of martial law and of pacifism, and raging bourgeois counter-revolution. The “Democratic-pacifist” era will hardly last much longer. We foresaw that. We said:

“In Great Britain (strengthening of the Labour Party at the recent elections), and in France (the inevitability approaching crisis in the so-called “left bloc”) such a ‘democratic-pacifist’ transition period is probable and may cause a revival of the pacifist hopes in bourgeois and Social-Democratic Germany. Between the present period of the rule of open bourgeois reaction and the complete victory of the revolutionary proletariat, various stages, and various transitional episodes are possible.”

The Communist International foresaw these very important events. Well, now they have come to pass. We actually have an entirely new situation before us, a sort of democratic-pacifist period in the most important countries of Europe; in Great Britain—the Labour Government; in France—the Left Bloc, with the Social-Democrats forming a *de facto*, but not a *de jure* part of the government; in Denmark—a Labour Government; in Austria—a great victory of the Social-Democrats; in Belgium—Vandervelde will probably enter the Government soon; a new government in Japan; in Czecho-Slovakia and in Poland—new phenomena, or at least new nuances will arise in connection with the victory of the Left Bloc in France, for Czecho-Slovakia is nothing but a vassal of this bourgeois State. In America we have the acceptance of the so-called opportunist “Experts’ Report” of the bourgeoisie, and the beginning of the movement of the so-called “Third Party,” There is also the recognition of Soviet Russia by various countries.

All this taken together represents this democratic-pacifist era. This will undoubtedly awaken new illusions not only

among the Social-Democratic workers, but also among the less hardened comrades among us, and encourage the semi-conscious “right wingers.” We must see this clearly.

### **Therapeutics Instead of Surgery.**

The bourgeoisie has now started to substitute “therapeutics” for “surgery.” I have already said in my opinion that the Experts’ Report is a noose round the neck of the German working class. But it is a silken noose, and it will be gradually tightened—with pauses for breath, and this is what the Social-Democrats call pacifism and the triumph of democracy. The application of the “Experts’ Report” is a huge Utopia. The greater the attempts of these people to conceal the differences among the imperialist bourgeoisie of the various countries, the more rapidly will this patchwork collapse. It is like a torn sock—the more it is darned with bad wool, the more it tears. The more patches these people make and the more they say “We are in complete harmony now, we have only one programme”—the sooner will it become obvious that this “Experts’ Report” is nothing but a scrap of paper. Of course, we will fight this “Experts’ Report” with all our might and expose the treacherous part played by the Social-Democrats.

### **Participation of Labour Party in Government Not a Passing Phase.**

It is clear now that in Great Britain the MacDonald Government will not be merely a passing phase. On the contrary, I believe that the so-called “Labour Party” will belong to government combinations in one form or another for many years to come. The Labour Party has become too strong,

and the power of the bourgeoisie has been too much shaken for it not to be a governmental factor. One can say definitely the international Social-Democracy has become the “Third Party” of the bourgeoisie; the “Third Party, as the part of “democracy” is spoken of in America. But the European Social-Democracy, as we know it, is really objectively speaking, nothing but a Third Party of the world bourgeoisie at the present time.

Therefore, I believe that the British Labour Party will probably appear in still other government combinations. Its participation in governments will not be a passing phase; but the longer it governs, the more will the illusions prevailing among the British workers diminish.

Thus, for us, the new international situation was not unexpected. Illusions will arise among many Social-Democratic workers. Loebe probably expressed what was in the minds of many Social-Democratic workers. Moreover, it is possible that the British Labour Government will come to the rescue of the German Social-Democrats by putting them back into the saddle for a time. The task of the Fifth Congress is to decide how to combat these illusions, how to approach the Social-Democratic and non party workers—particularly in two most important countries, Great Britain and France—to make them see clearly what is taking place in Europe, that the “pacifists” are like a “soporific” to put them to sleep. The Experts’ Report contains a number of concealed, cruel demands, but the German working class has not yet spoken, and the international working class also will have its say.

### **The War Menace.**

Has not the moment arrived when we Communists must bring up Friedrich Engel’s question, “Can Europe disarm!” Must we not say, “In Great Britain a Labour Government, a

Government of the Second International, is at the helm; in Russia a Soviet Government, a Government of the Third International, is in power, the Cossacks are no longer there. Russian Czarism has disappeared. There is a Left bloc in France, where the Socialists are taking part in the Government. A pacifist- democratic era has begun in America; in Austria and in Belgium, you are very strong. You do not wish for war. Therefore, please tell us, why do you not disarm!"

We know very well that they will not only evade this question, but that in Great Britain and in France everywhere they support armaments.

I have taken this as an example in order to prove that we have reached a situation in which we must expect the outbreak of a new series of wars, and we must take proper measures.

### **Problem of Power on the Order of the Day.**

That roughly speaking, is the international situation. I believe, nevertheless, that in spite of the "normal" "pacifist" period, that in the most important countries of bourgeois Europe the problem of power has now arisen. I will soon explain what I mean by that.

Comrades, it is claimed that the situation is normal, capitalism is becoming stable, everything is running smoothly, and yet we see government crisis after government crisis. In the last few weeks a half dozen governments were overthrow. It is not yet the fresh wind of the revolution which is blowing these governments away. But it is a symptom of insecurity. The whole political situation is evidence of that. In the most important European countries, the problem of power has arisen; the bourgeoisie cannot rule as it has done hitherto. Naked, clean (or rather, dirty), frankly class-bourgeois rule is

now impossible. In a number of countries the bourgeoisie is forced to resort too trickery—hence the Labour Government in Great Britain and the Left bloc with the Socialists in France. The bourgeoisie cannot govern as it has done hitherto. Formerly there was a two-party system in Great Britain. And what do we see now in this classic land of capitalism?

### **Social-Democracy a Third Party of the Bourgeoisie.**

Social-Democracy has become the “Third Party.” Even the British bourgeoisie can no longer rule by the old methods; it resorts to a Labour Government. The bourgeoisie now turns to a Labour Government, now to fascism, and then to Social-Democracy. The fascists are the right hand, and the Social-Democrats the left hand of the bourgeoisie.

We see how the Second International has come to power for the second time. The first time it came to power during the war; the motives which, prompted the bourgeoisie in this are clear, but if we have “normalcy” now, why does the bourgeoisie need them? That’s just it; the “normal” conditions are far from being normal, and they must be understood.

The Second International is supplying ministers for Great Britain, and also for France. The Social-Democrats are being used in Belgium; and in a number of other countries, for instance, in Denmark, etc. What does this mean! The Social-Democrats claim that they are enemies of the bourgeoisie. What would have been said had we appointed General Denikin as, Minister in the Russian Government? It would have been said, ,” This is a proof that the Soviet Government can no longer govern; it is beginning to totter; the question of power has become a burning question.” It is true that Social-Democrats are not of the same significance for the bourgeoisie that Denikin was for us. Still the facts prove that the position of

the bourgeoisie is sufficiently unstable to compel it, not only in such small countries as Esthonia and Denmark, but even in Great Britain, to put power at least for the time being, into the hands of the so-called Labour Government. This is one of the best proofs of how unstable the situation is, and that the situation, objectively speaking, is a revolutionary one. And that again is the tactical key to our position.

### **The Radek-Brandler Theory is Erroneous.**

Take for instance the controversy in the German Party on the notorious victory of Fascism over the November Republic. At present we can say that this question is settled from the German as well as from the international viewpoint. There is no doubt whatever that the Social-Democratic Party has become the third bourgeois party, a government party. This is the case almost in every country. The theory that fascism has conquered Social-Democracy has, therefore, proved false, which means that Radek's and Brandler's theories have fallen to the ground. The theory that fascism has conquered Social-Democracy was a misleading key which led to opportunist deductions. If it was true that the Social-Democrats fought against the fascists and were defeated by them, the logical conclusion would be the rapprochement with the Social-Democrats and not the intensification of the struggle against them.

### **Social-Democracy a Wing of Fascism.**

But as the Social-Democrats did not fight the fascists and were not defeated by them, Communists must follow tactics different from those advocated by Radek. The most important



factor in all this is—that the Social- Democratic Party has been converted into a wing of fascism. This is a great political fact. For what is the French Socialist party if not the left wing of the bourgeoisie? The recent election has provided the documentary proof of this. The bourgeois and Social-Democratic Parties had a joint list of candidates. The only difference between them was—that the names of the bourgeois parties occupied the right side of the list while the names of this Socialist Party were on the left. What other proof do we need? The French Socialist Party is the left wing of the French bourgeoisie. It is still playing hide and seek, it has not yet openly joined the government, but it is, one of its factors. This becomes more and more evident as the situation develops. The Second International is now the left wing of the bourgeoisie. This does not show only the opportunist and treacherous spilt of Social-Democracy, but also the uncertainty of the position of the bourgeoisie, which compels it to adopt such means.

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## QUESTIONS OF TACTICS.

### **Opportunistic Deductions of Comrade Hula.**

I now come to the questions of tactics. To begin with, I wish to make a few general remarks on this question. Hitherto I thought that the question of winning over the majority to our side had been solved at the Third Congress. But it has now become evident that this question still requires elucidation.

This was shown by the statement made in the speeches of several members of the Czech Party. I have read an article by Hula who seized upon a sentence in an article of mine in which

I said that our task consisted in winning over to our side the majority of the most important and decisive sections of the working class as a pre-requisite of victorious revolution. He at once sounded the alarm and quoted Lenin against me. My contention was presumed to be the direct opposite to Lenin's precepts. Hula said. "No evidence is necessary to prove that the "gaining over of the majority of the more important elements of the working class," is a vague and indefinite expression and that the interpretation of it under certain circumstances, in the last resort is a contradiction, because to will over the majority of the more important elements of the working class may also be taken to mean the winning of the majority of the proletariat; particularly as no definition is given of what may constitute the more important elements of the working class, and which are not important, and, therefore, as should logically follow, from Zinoviev's phrase, are not worth bothering about."

### **The Question of Winning the Majority.**

What does Hula's article imply? Nothing but the well-known opportunist theory that a statistical majority of 99 per cent, must be won over and organised before there can be any thought of revolution. This is an opportunistic idea which is bound to lead us astray, if we accept it. I think that one of the most important tasks before the Congress is the careful study of this question of winning over the majority. There is nothing new to be said on the subject. All we shall have to do will be to oppose any attempt to revise the formula of the Third Congress. There are comrades who are little concerned about winning over the majority and are generally careless in their handling of this cardinal question. We combat these "ultra-lefts," but they represent an insignificant minority. They are sentimental revolutionaries. They are not dangerous. The real

danger lies in several serious comrades demanding a statistical majority of 99 per cent, or thereabout before even contemplating a proper fight. It is worse still when Hula writes such an article; for it reveals more moods than usually developed by Hula. As to the winning over of the majority, I think we must endorse the formula of the Third Congress. Tables have been elaborated on this question, which you see displayed in this hall. I am not going to take up your time with a string of figures, but will merely tell you that these figures show that the time is near when we shall be as strong as the Second International at the zenith of its power. In some countries this has already been achieved. This being so, we run the same risks as the Second International, just because we have become mass parties. Of course, we do not run exactly the same risk, because side by side with us, we have the Social-Democratic Parties which absorb the worst elements. The greater the treachery of the Social-Democrats, the stronger we will be. At this Congress we may raise the question of the majority quite definitely. We must continue our fight for the capture of the most important sections of the working class. This is one of Lenin's most important slogans. This does not mean, of course, that we shall allow ourselves to be driven back to the position of the Social-Democrats. We have nothing to do with the Kautsky methods of first organising the working class into parties and trade unions, then taking the vote and only then—revolution! Such methods will not carry us into the revolutionary fight, and will never convert us into a revolutionary party.

All of you must be familiar with Comrade Lenin's brilliant work on the results of the election to the Constituent Assembly in Russia. We went through this election campaign when we had already assumed power. Nevertheless, our party polled 9½ million votes out of 36 million, while the Socialist revolutionaries and the Mensheviks polled 25 million votes.

Comrade Lenin frankly commented on this as follows:

“At that time we did not have a numerical majority, but we had a majority in the most important centres and at the decisive moment, and it is this that mattered.”

If Comrade Hula regards himself as a disciple of Comrade Lenin, he should teach the precept of his great master to the Czech workers, viz., the *decisive* majority, at the *decisive* place, and at the *decisive* moment. Is the greatest danger in the Czech Party the probability of it coming into the fray too soon? This danger, comrades, does not exist in Czecho-Slovakia. Why then this article? And what is its objective meaning after the recent conflict in the German Party and in the Comintern generally? In this situation, this article is nothing but support of the “right.” This must be frankly stated. I hope that Comrade Hula will not persist in his errors. All of us make mistakes, but having made mistakes, we should rectify them. If Comrade Hula is of a different mind, if he wants to convert his mistakes into a theory, and will be supported in this way by Czech comrades, the Communist International will have to fight the Czech Party: for these theories are bound to lead to a repetition of what the “right” did in the German Party. Moreover, the situation in the Czech Party in many ways is still more complicated.

### **Tasks of the German Communist Party.**

A doubt has arisen about the strength of the German Party. With smug satisfaction the *Vorwärts* quotes Radek, who said that the election victory of the German Communists must not be over-estimated. But if on the parliamentary field in Germany we have a proportion of 62 Communists to 100 Social-Democrats, everyone can see that the time is not far distant when we shall have the majority of the working class

behind us. For on the parliamentary field the German Social-Democrats are ahead of us, because their vote consisted not only of working class votes. All this goes to prove that we are on the point of capturing one-half of the German working class. I have carefully examined the nature of the vote in the elections to the factory councils in Germany. It is much more favourable than the vote in the parliamentary elections. These statistics have been compiled by Comrade Varga and his collaborators. But this does not mean that we can rest on our laurels. We may lose the masses we have won if we make mistakes. We must go further, we must unite the majority of the workers in the struggles; and this we shall do.

Thus you see that in Germany, and perhaps also in other parties matters have moved forward considerably. But for 90 per cent. of the Communist International the state of things is such that parties should concern themselves less with "high politics," and more with carrying out the following simple measures: In the first place, the must be able to build up Communist Parties on a factory nuclei in the factories.

Secondly, we must use correct tactics in our trade union work. We must learn to found Communist functions in the trade unions and capture them from within.

Thirdly, we must adopt a correct policy on the national question. And fourthly, to conduct a correct policy in regard to the peasant question.

### **It is Necessary to Win Over the Peasantry.**

*He who cannot work among the peasants is not a Leninist.* I have already referred to the agrarian poverty in all countries. This alone should be enough to induce us to conduct definite intensive work among the peasants, for large sections of the peasantry are on the point of despair. Hitherto, even in agrarian

countries, Communist Parties have displayed remarkable inability in the matter of capturing the peasantry. Even our Balkan Parties and the Polish Party have not made genuine efforts to work among the peasantry to the very last moment. The same may be said of the German and other Communist Parties. You know the result of the election in Carpathian Russia. Many Czech comrades, Tausig, Gati, and others, particularly local comrades worked heroically and exposed themselves to great danger in the campaign. I have the impression however, that the Czech Party on the whole does not appreciate the importance of the peasants' question in Czecho-Slovakia. Such a thing as, for instance, the inability of our Rumanian comrades to tell us the percentage of peasantry in the population of Rumania, and what agrarian relations prevail, etc. must not occur again. What was the principle mistake of the Bulgarian Party in June, 1923? The lack of revolutionary contact with the peasantry and the absence of a clear view of the role of the peasantry. The Bulgarian Party has remedied this, and more progress is being made.

### **Partial Demands.**

I should like to add a few more words on the question of partial demands. We Bolsheviks differed from the Mensheviks not because we were against partial demands, but because we managed to combine these partial demands with the fundamental questions of the revolution. For the Mensheviks these meant substituting reformist evolution for revolution; while for us they were links in the chain of preparation for revolution. The campaign conducted by our German comrades for the eight-hour day and for political amnesty is a campaign for partial demands, which we must put forward if we desire to be a party of the masses. But are these demands an ultimate

aim? Certainly not, they are merely partial demands. I think that the real “left” of the Communist International, which is truly Leninist, can on no account object to the tactics of partial demands on principle, but it must be able to construct these tactics as a policy of revolution and not of evolution.

### **British Labour Movement Drifting Towards the Left.**

To wind up this section—just a few words on the trade union question. I believe that this question will be one of the most important questions before our congress. There have been new and very important developments, especially in the British trade union movement. The British Labour movement is a peculiar movement. Recently, I read a report by Max Beer. He is not a Communist and was formerly a Social-Democrat, but he left the Social-Democratic ranks. He is an excellent authority on the British Labour movement, and a very conscientious man. His opinion is very valuable. What has he to say on the Labour movement in Great Britain? He says that he knows three revolutionary facts in England’s history. Firstly, the Chartist movement, secondly, the formation of the Labour Party and the beginning of the struggle against old fashioned trade unionism, and thirdly, the epoch-making fact of the beginning of the emancipation of the British Labour Movement from reformism. This process, he says, commenced in 1917, in connection with the Russian revolution. It developed gradually and has now reached the point when quantity is transformed into quality. It sounds plausible, comrades. He says further that evidences are observable of divergences between the best elements of the trade unions and the Labour Party, and it must be remembered that the Labour Party rests upon the trade unions.

Comrades, I believe this to be true on the whole. Just look

at what is going on in that country. Suddenly a comrade so near to us as Cook wins the leadership of a great trade union. Of course, these are merely signs and symptoms, and they must not, be over-estimated, nor must they be under-estimated. The attitude of the English delegates at the Vienna Congress of the Amsterdam Unions was also symptomatic. To be sure, these people are inconsistent, but they are driven by the masses. What did these people mean by demanding from Sassenbach, "Where is Rosa Luxemburg; where is Karl Liebknecht?" The English trade unions have so far been the main support of Amsterdam. They were to Amsterdam what the Russian and German Parties are to the Communist International. What would happen if the Russian and the German Communist Parties were to deliver Social-Democratic speeches against the Communists! Everyone would say that this is a real crisis. This very real crisis, however, has overtaken the Amsterdam people. What does it mean when the English delegates ask, "Where are Luxemburg and Liebknecht?" It means nothing else than the endorsement of our assertion that the Social-Democrats are the accomplices of the murders of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. Of course, these people are inconsistent, they have no programme, they were partly prompted by the desire to demonstrate that they are for a rapprochement with the Russian Trade Union at the moment when the Russian and British Governments are negotiating in London.

The main task of the Communist International in all spheres lies now in England. A Communist mass party in England would mean half the victory in Europe. The circumstances are ripe for it. Therefore, we should not underestimate what is going on in England.

I believe, comrades, we shall have to study the question thoroughly, and to see what really can be done to achieve real unity of the trade union movement on an international scale. The more astute Social-Democrats of Germany, Belgium, and



France will have none of this unity. Already at the Fourth Congress we declared that the Social-Democrats will do anything to bring about a split in the trade unions, and that we must, therefore, do our utmost to bring about the unity of the trade unions on an international scale.

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## **TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT.**

### **Roots of United Front.**

Now, comrades, I come to the question of the tactics of the united front, to the most debated question in our ranks. In this respect, too, I am fully in agreement with the instruction given by the German Communist Party to its delegation, in which the German Party declares that now is not the time to discuss the tactics of the united front as a question in itself. I am in complete agreement with this; the tactic of the united front remains correct. The question should be put concretely, for every country separately, in accordance with the prevailing conditions.

Nevertheless, there are a few general things to be said on this subject.

Historically speaking, how did we fare with the tactics of the united front? Looking back on the road that has been traversed, we can see that to the Communist International as a whole in 1921-22, the tactics of the united front meant the realisation that we have not yet won a majority of the working class; secondly, that the social-democracy is still very strong; thirdly, that we are on the defensive and that the enemy was

attacking (by the way, it should be observed that last year's strikes, for instance in England, were mostly of a defensive nature, as was the case also in the other countries); fourthly, that the decisive fight is not yet on the order of the day. Hence we advanced the slogan, "To the masses!" and later to the tactics of the united front. I have already pointed out, comrades, that there was a time in the Communist International when we were virtually nothing more than a propagandist society, without being aware of the fact ourselves. After the first skirmishes, the actual correlation of forces become clear, and along with it came the consciousness that we are still in the minority, that the Social-Democracy is strong, that we are on the defensive, and this was, historically speaking, the origin of the tactics of the united front.

### **Distortion of Slogan of United Front.**

We understood the tactics of the united front as preparatory work for the revolution. But in some places it was misinterpreted as the idea of substituting the tactics of revolution by peaceful, evolutionary methods. We perceived these tactics as strategical manoeuvres. Some comrades endeavoured to interpret them as an alliance with the Social-Democracy, as a coalition of all "Labour parties."

Recently a Communist Party passed a resolution "not for publication" in which it declared that all this is excellent; let it be a strategic manoeuvre, but we must not speak of it so frequently and so openly, otherwise our opponents will use it against us. The resolution literally says the following—"In this connection (united front) we must take care not unnecessarily to reveal to our opponents the sense of our revolutionary strategy." Comrades, I regard this as naive childishness or reformism. I rather think it is the latter, for people who speak in

this fashion are not children.

The greatest weakness revealed by our party is that when it is proposed to them to adopt some revolutionary strategy against our most cunning enemies, the Social- Democrats, they immediately endeavour to make this strategy profound, to explain it from the Marxist standpoint and to convert it into a complete theory which turns out to be un-Communitic.

### **What Constitutes Revolutionary Strategy.**

The Bolshevik Party has had to make many manoeuvres during the revolution. The genius of Lenin consisted to a large extent in his skill in the use of strategic art. It is the good fortune of our party that in the execution of every manoeuvre, we knew exactly what we were driving at. This enabled us to execute our manoeuvres. We wished to fight and we desired the victory; we wished politically to destroy the Mensheviks and the social-revolutionists, and to this end we directed our political manoeuvres. The trouble with some of our sections in the Comintern, young or otherwise, is that firstly they consider every strategical manoeuvre inadmissible, and secondly, where they do apply they take it too seriously and endeavour to convert it into a "profound" system.

To this I must add that some of the blame rests also upon myself, for being somewhat too yielding in this respect.

Permit me to deal with this question in detail. On the 11<sup>th</sup> of June, 1922, I delivered a speech before the Enlarged Executive on the question of the United Front tactics, in which I said: "The united front does not in the least involve political concessions or diminish the dependence of our Party. It means that our independent Communist Parties must formulate their slogans with a view to expediency; the slogan of the 'Workers' Government' is a pseudonym for Soviet Republic." I was at

once taken to task, and I must say that I could not at first see on what grounds I was assailed. For instance. Comrade Ernest Meyer attacked me in a speech before the Fourth Congress in connection with this question. Comrade Radek tried to act as mediator, although he did

not entirely associate himself with my formula. My mistake consisted in that I did not see at once that it was a question of opportunist misinterpretation of a good slogan. I did not think of the fact that by formulating the slogan so sharply, I may have made it difficult for the comrades to agitate for it; in a word, I could not see at once why this sentence had roused so much opposition.

### **Workers' and Peasants' Government.**

An attempt was made to misinterpret the slogan of the Workers' and Peasants' Government too, as a government by all the Labour Parties and by some peasant parties. What is the origin of this slogan? It is pretended now that this slogan was to serve for a whole period; that it implied the alliance of "all" labour and peasant parties in the framework of bourgeois democracy and other puppets of this kind. As a matter of fact the slogan is connected with the Russian revolution. What was the meaning of this slogan in the Russian Revolution? It was a pseudonym for the proletarian dictatorship; no more and no less. When after the July days of 1917 we saw that things were moving, that the workers and soldiers were with us, and that we could win over some of the peasants, we were confronted with the question of formulating the goal of the struggle in the simplest and most attractive way. The slogan of the "Proletarian Dictatorship" would not be so intelligible to the masses. How was the illiterate Russian mujik or soldier to understand these Latin words: Proletarian Dictatorship? It was

then that we translated these words into Russian. We said, you are a peasant, a working man, a soldier. Do you see the clique which governs. We have the power, we have the weapons! Won't you set up a Workers' and Peasants Government? We simply translated the Latin into the Russian for their benefit. The peasants, the worker, and the soldier, were not bound to understand the meaning of the term, Proletarian dictatorship; but they rapidly understood the meaning of the term of "Workers' and Peasants' Government."

### **Formula of United Front.**

You know the many discussions that took place on the question, united front from top or from the bottom, and so on. I believe we can formulate the question in the following manner.

United front from the bottom. Properly speaking, these tactics are always necessary, perhaps with the exception of quite rare moments of direct civil war, when it may be necessary to fight with arms against workers on the counter-revolutionary side; although I may say, from the experience of the Russian Revolution, that even at such extreme moments we succeeded in carrying out the united front from the bottom. At the moment when Kerensky was marching on Petrograd, we mobilised the masses from the ranks of the Social-revolutionary party, against the orders of their own government, and got them to fight shoulder to shoulder with us. The united front from the bottom is always appropriate because it gives the facility for the actual mobilisation of all the really revolutionary workers.

United front from the bottom as well as from the top. This is another matter, and it arises fairly frequently; not always, but fairly frequently, in those countries where we are in the minority. I believe that no one even of the "extreme

left” will deny that in countries like England, Austria, Belgium, where we have a small minority, the tactics of the united front from the top and from the bottom should be applied, of course, with all the safeguards and guarantees against it being applied opportunistically, and to apply them as a method of agitation and mobilisation of the masses, and not as a method of political coalition with the Social-Democracy.

The third case is that of the united front from the top only. Here, I believe, we must say, Never!

Unfortunately, this method was all too frequently applied in practice: it was so easy to write an open letter to the Social-Democrats to conduct long and protracted negotiations with the leaders over the question of a programme. This was the line of least resistance.

Consequently, this question we may sum up as follows: United front from the bottom—nearly always; united front from the top—fairly frequently, and with all the necessary guarantees as to the tactics of mobilisation that would facilitate the revolutionising of the masses; united front from the top alone—never!

(Radek : Hear, hear!)

Even Radek says, Hear, hear. Now what were the actual developments? At the Fourth Congress the resolution of the Workers’ Government was adopted. Here again, I must frankly admit—and revolutionary comrades should always admit mistakes—that some mistakes were made in the drafting of this resolution, too many concessions were made which were immediately taken by the “right” as meaning a political concession. I allude to the following sentence in the resolution of the Fourth Congress on the Workers’ Government which I drew up:

“In opposition to both open or masked bourgeois Social-Democratic coalition, the Communists may put up the united front of all the toiling masses, and a coalition of all labour

parties both in the economic and political field, for the fight against the power of the bourgeoisie, and for its final overthrow. As a result of the combined fight of all the workers against the bourgeoisie, the whole machinery of State must pass into the hands of the Workers' Government and by this the domination and power of the working class must be consolidated."

### **On "Compromises."**

In 1917, Lenin wrote an article "On Compromises," in which he dealt with the possibility of a pact with the Mensheviks and Social-revolutionists in the question of forming a government responsible to the Soviets. In that article he wrote:

"We have now reached such an abrupt and unique turn in the Russian revolution that we may, as a Party, offer a voluntary compromise, of course, not to the bourgeoisie, to our direct and principal class enemy, but to our immediate opponents, to the "leading" petty-bourgeois—democratic parties, to the Social-revolutionists and Mensheviks.

"By way of an exception, and in view of peculiar circumstances which evidently will continue only for a very short period, we can offer a compromise to these parties, and it seems to me that we must do so.

"On our part, the compromise means a return to our, pre-July demand, 'all power to the Soviets,' a government of Social-revolutionists and Mensheviks responsible to the Soviets.

"Only at the present moment can such a government be created, perhaps in a few days or in one or two weeks, and become consolidated quite peacefully. It could ensure, with considerable probability, the peaceful progressive march of the

whole Russian revolution, and very great chances for big steps forward by the world-wide movement for peace and the victory of Socialism.

Only for the sake of this peaceful development of the revolution—an opportunity extremely rare in history and extremely valuable, an exceptionally rare opportunity—only for the sake of this opportunity the Bolsheviks, the advocates of the world-wide revolution, the advocates of revolutionary methods, can and must, to my mind, agree to such a compromise.”

Further on he says:

“The task of a truly revolutionary Party consists not in an impossible repudiation of any compromise, but while going in for all the compromises, inasmuch as they are unavoidable, to remain loyal to its principles, to its class, to its revolutionary task, to its cause of preparing for the revolution and of educating the masses of the people for a victorious revolution.” (Article “On Compromises,” September 3rd, 1917.)

### **Strategical Manoeuvre, not System.**

That, Comrade Smeral, was just a strategical move. He spoke of an “honourable coalition.” Such a form of words is permissible in agitation. Did Lenin intend to become reconciled to Mensheviks and join a government of “all” workers and peasant parties? Not in the least. It was merely a strategical manoeuvre. The *strength* of the Communist and of the other alleged workers’ parties is certainly very great. If these workers’ parties were real workers’ parties, not according to their composition, but politically, and we could form a coalition with them, we would become unconquerable in Europe. But these parties are workers’ parties only in name. It is, therefore, nonsense, it is a sin, it is counter-revolutionary



utopianism, it is opportunism to talk of coalition with all workers' parties.

### **The Lesson from Saxony**

The climax was Saxony. It is absolutely clear to us that what happened in Saxony was a banal Social-Democratic comedy. From that moment it was necessary to call a halt. We cannot plead overestimating the revolutionary possibilities as a justification for what took place in Saxony. That would be a cheap argument. We can never be absolutely certain of success in revolution. I say, that if the revolutionary situation on Oct. 1923 occurs again we shall again shout from the housetops that the revolution is at hand.

Over-estimation of the position is not the worst. What is worse, as Saxony showed, is that many survivals of Social-Democracy existed in our Party. Radek asks, "Did we read all the German newspapers as he did? Did we know all the details about Saxony?" The Leningrad, Moscow workers replied, "We cannot read German; but we have made three revolutions, one in 1905 and two in 1917, under Lenin's leadership. We have enough common sense to know that a banal comedy was played in Saxony. Saxony revealed the true state of affairs about the united front workers' government and the right wing in the Comintern."

The resolution on the workers' government by the Fourth Congress on the whole was correct. A number of its passages are excellent. A number of its forecasts have come to pass.

The position is outlined as it should have been regarded as a thought-out plan for winning over the masses. But to construct a complete "theory" that we are entering a long period of workers' governments composed Communist Parties

“all” workers’ parties and peasant parties on the basis of democracy, is the beginning of opportunism. What are the later developments of the matter? After the Fourth Congress, the right wing in the Communist International took the offensive.

Then came the Leipsic Party Convention, where a resolution was adopted stating that the adoption of the United Front in Germany was the linking up with the illusions and prejudices of the Social-Democratic workers.

That is perhaps an unfortunate way of putting it. But what else is the following description of the Workers’ Government?

“It is neither the dictatorship of the proletariat nor a peaceful parliamentary transition thereto. It is an attempt by the working class to carry on a workers’ policy, as a beginning, by means of labour democracy supported by proletarian organisations and proletarian mass movements...”

### **Mistakes of Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party.**

After the Leipsic Party Convention, came the party conference in Prague. If you study the resolution of the Prague conference you will find therein this paragraph: “The Workers’ Government can also be a peaceful transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is an attempt by the working class to carry on a workers’ policy by means of bourgeois democracy supported by proletariat organisations and proletarian mass movements.”

This is a literal repetition, I do not know if this occurred quite by chance or if there is a plan in it, I feel convinced it is the latter. You know, of course, that Comrade Radek is in favour of a “plan” in other spheres (Brandler: Radek was quite innocent of this matter). No, you are mistaken, Comrade Brandler, Radek is far more responsible for the whole matter than are you, as he is responsible generally for opportunist

mistakes, recently.”

Bukharin and I opposed this clause of the Leipsic resolution, but I must confess we did not do so openly and formally, we were not dictatorial enough, we did not sufficiently use the power of the Executive.

Well, Comrade Radek says, What do you expect of Bundler, Brandler is a bricklayer, and when he expresses himself he hurls brick about. Very well, Brandler is a bricklayer, but Smeral is not, and when he quotes he does not throw bricks about. (Laughter.) I must say that the end of the Prague resolution, drafted by Comrade Smeral, is much more fortunately expressed than is Brandler’s. But be repeated most of the opportunist postulates.

Well, comrades, whoever accepts these postulates is in conflict with Leninism and Communism, he conceives a special peaceful transitional period of workers’ governments and workers’ and peasants’ governments, in which it will be able to do everything without revolution and in a democratic manner. After Leipsic and Prague and particularly after Saxony, it became clear that it was not so matter of words but of understanding two systems of policy. The German Left, who we thought exaggerated too much (and in many matters they have exaggerated a great deal) proved to be right in this case. They alone, at the Moscow Conference foretold the outcome of the Saxony experiment. This compelled us to ponder over the matter and change our opinions of the left. The Saxony experiment created a new situation, it threatened the beginning of the liquidation of the tactics of the Communist International. That being so, we must state the case clearly and make our choice.

**United Front Tactics Remain Fully in Force.**

What are the tactics of the United Front, what is the workers' government, and what is the workers' and peasants' government! It is no use attempting to scare us, as Comrade Radek sometimes did, when he said that this is a revision of almost all the previous decisions of the resolutions of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern. Why such terrible words!

We wish only to revise the clumsy, careless and wrong clauses which Radek smuggled into the resolution of the Fourth Congress. We wish to render them proof against misinterpretation. We want to formulate this in such a way that the bricklayer as well as the professor may see clearly what is being dealt with. We are in favour of using the tactics of the United Front for winning over the majority of the working class. The tactics of the United Front remain in force as before, we stand by the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government. In its resolution the German Party says, rightly: In countries like Italy, France and several others, a workers' and peasants' government is quite appropriate. I believe if we understand this watchword in the sense in which the Russian Party has understood it, none of the real "left" will have anything to say against it.

Whence comes this watchword! It has often been represented that Radek invented it. That is not true. The watchword was produced in the course of the Russian Revolution, and what Radek has done with it is merely to distort it. We want to use this watchword as the Russian Revolution used it. We have already described the application of the watchword of the workers' government (Radek: We formed a coalition with the Social-revolutionaries.") We do not deny the possibility in Europe too of taking into a Soviet Government a chunk of the Social-Democracy which will break away from the Social-Democratic Party and will be inclined for a time to support us. This is what happened with the left social revolutionists. It was a chunk which broke away

from the Socialist Revolutionary Party, and which was followed by part of the peasantry. We took them in tow. But as soon as they began to talk the social-revolutionist language, we got rid of them. This was the correct strategy. But the plan of a pact with the social-revolutionary and Menshevik parties after October was a mistake. At the time of the October revolution, a group of comrades thought it possible to form a pact with the social-revolutionists and the Mensheviks. I belonged to this group myself for a time, but it was a huge mistake. Soon we conceived our mistake and rectified it. And now you want us to transplant this erroneous policy into other Communist parties. This we shall never do.

### **Successes of United Front in England.**

Mistakes have also been made in England in this connection.

Comrade Ruth Fischer writes in *Die Internationale* upon her observations in England. I am completely in agreement with what she says about Ferguson's election campaign, for his not entering the contest openly as a Communist. If we have to conceal our real identity, of what use is the election? Comrade Newbold, when he was a member of the British Parliament, plagued me and Comrade Bukharin, quite seriously, with the question: Was it permissible in parliament in exceptional circumstances to speak and vote against the Labour Party? We replied: That is what you are there for. In spite of all these mistakes in the British Party, however, the United Front has produced some positive results. In local trade union branches, Communist workers, in many cases, have acted quite rightly and have won a great deal. This was also done in the Czecho-Slovakian Party locally (factories, etc.), and made good also in Germany. The mistakes have been made in the sphere of

parliament, of trade union central bodies, municipal bodies, etc. These are the main sources of opportunism, but in the factories and localities, despite this opportunistic tendency, a fair amount of good work has been done.

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## **PROBLEM OF WORKERS' GOVERNMENT.**

### **Types of "Workers' Governments."**

We have now collected some experience and must say frankly that the essence of the slogan for us is a method of agitation and of organising the masses. We must, of course, take advantage of the situation created by the existence of a labour government, like that of Mac Donald's. The workers' government is for us the most powerful and popular formula for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The workers and peasants perform the deed and then understand it. We must adopt the popular formula as we did in the Russian Revolution. This is no small question, it is not a question of more style, but a question whether we are a party which can touch the peasants and soldiers where they are most receptive, a party which is not a sect but a mass party as the Bolsheviks were.

"Every bourgeois government is at the same time a capitalist government, but not every workers' government is a real proletarian government, i.e. a revolutionary weapon of proletarian power. The Communist International must take account of the following possibilities.

(1) A Liberal-Labour government. Such a government existed in Australia; such a government may soon arise in England in the near future.

- (2) A Social-Democratic workers' government (Germany).
- (3) A workers' and peasants government. Such a possibility exists in the Balkans, Czecho-Slovakia, etc.
- (4) A workers' government with Communist participation.
- (5) A genuine proletarian workers' government, which can be realised in its pure form only by the Communist Party.

I know many comrades have a great objection to the tactics of the united front as such. I can offer these comrades only one comfort. I say to them that the united front and the workers' government are only instruments for the mobilisation and organisation of the working masses. If that does not please them I propose a compromise. Win the support of the majority of the working classes in your country, and we will immediately absolve you from the use of these instruments, (Laughter.) If you have a majority of the most important strata of the proletariat, certainly you may be less strict in the use of these tactics. But, in the most important countries the fact is that we have not yet this majority. We must understand how to approach the masses as they are, to win them over, to lead them on the way to Bolshevism, and then be able to modify these tactics.

### **We Must Conform to Concrete Situation.**

I have read that in Czecho-Slovakia, Hula and other comrades are much disturbed because we now say everywhere there must be an united front from below, and that we will not modify this according to circumstances in each country. Neurath was quite right in his article against Hula in which he said that the executive never proposed this. The E.C. never proposed this. We said that in Germany conditions were so ripe that we must now call for unity from below. At the same moment, we said it was obviously quite otherwise in Poland,

and also in Austria and other countries. The whole art of the International consists in making concrete use of tactics because the situation is extremely varied in each country. We have never said that all parties should be treated alike. Will Comrade Smeral inform Hula of this.

### **Attention to the Peasantry.**

You will remember that I was the originator of the slogan of a workers' and peasants' government at the meeting of the Enlarged Executive. How did that come about. Because of the realisation that we were marching forward in a number of countries and were getting pretty near to the problem of the seizure of power. And that is why we always tried to tell the various parties, "Pay attention to your peasants!"

Of course, a Party which is nowhere near power does not need to do this. It remains merely a Party to a section of the toiling masses. But from the moment the Party seriously thinks of power, becomes a mass party, it must consider how the peasants will act, and how the country will react to the government of the Party. Therefore, our slogan of a workers' and peasants' government expresses the fact that in many countries we are approaching the problem of power. It is the expression for the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution and the leadership of the Party of the proletariat. For us it was in a certain license a transition from revolutionary propaganda to revolutionary deed.

There is a difference between agitation and propaganda. The best definition of this difference was made by Plekhanov when he was a Marxist: "Propaganda means conveying certain complexes of ideas to a small circle of people; agitation means spreading one main idea among a great mass of people." I think this definition is good enough for us. It is correct. Thus our



slogan arose from the fact that we were obliged to turn from propaganda of Communism to agitation among the masses of the people, and to prepare for the struggle for power. When we have to face the struggle for power we must make use of just this catchword for it is popular and attractive, and, when it has been well-explained to the workers, will serve as a magnet for all those strata which should either be neutralised or drawn into the movement.

Therefore, this slogan of the workers' and peasants' government is for us the expression of the hegemony of the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution, of the will to power, of the determination to form a government of our own which will be able to handle the peasantry. Attempts have been made with partial success to kill this vital conception of Leninism, this living source of Leninistic activity and agitation among the masses, by opportunistic interpretations.

Comrade Burean (Junior) in Czecho-Slovakia, writes for instance, that the tactics of the united front is the main source of revisionism. That is not true. Anybody who is a revisionist will soon find a "source" in parliamentarism or something else. (Laughter and Hear, hear.) We cannot defeat the Social-Democracy if we are afraid of our own shadow and keep on saying that the tactics of the united front are a source of revisionism. We must take what is good; what is Leninistic in the united front, and what is popular in the workers' government; what will win the confidence of the masses, not only of the working class, but of all the oppressed.

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## CONCRETE TASKS OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES.

### The British Party.

I now come to the final part of my report: the concrete tasks of the most important parties. And here I agree with the German Party in its view that each separate Party must be given its own concrete directions. That will be the most important work of this Congress.

Politically, the most important section of the Communist International, at present, is not the German, nor the Russian, but the British Section. Here we are faced by remarkable situations: a Party of only three to four thousand members, wields far wider influence than would appeal from these figures. For in Britain we are dealing with a different tradition. MacDonald's party is not much stronger than ours. Their weekly paper, the *New Leader*, has a circulation of 15,000; we have a circulation of 55,000. The tradition of a mass party is not known in England. Max Beer is quite right when he says that old Keir Hardie looked upon the movement as a means of influencing individual leaders. To form a mass party in England is the chief task of the entire present period. The conditions are there. But the British Party shows signs of great weakness. For instance, it does not dare to criticise MacDonald.

Now with regard to this, one must candidly admit that great masses of the British workers are still attached to MacDonald and speak of him with affection.

I have the feeling that it is the same situation as we had in Russia during the first month of Kerensky's government. Nobody, could say a word against Kerensky. One had to criticise him indirectly; first for an hour to dilate on how Kerensky was a good fellow and almost a great man, and then

delicately hinting that he, too, makes mistakes. In Britain we have the same state of affairs. The workers are still attached to MacDonald; they are still full of illusions and he has the advantage that he has not a majority in Parliament. This enables him to say to the workers: "I should like to do much more, but I have not a majority; after the next elections, when we have a majority, we will show the stuff we are made of."

The situation, therefore, is not so simple. The MacDonald Government is still on a rising wave of popularity. But if we wait passively until the tide turns, then we shall have no need of a Communist Party. The Social Democracy will go bankrupt anyhow. We must hasten the process. That is the reason why our Party in Britain must resolutely fight MacDonald now in order that when the masses at length realise Macdonald's true character they will know that we, the Communists, told them the truth long ago.

In 1921, Lenin fought against Wynkoop and other "lefts" of that time, over the question of Communists joining the Labour Party. But in 1924, we are face to face with a new situation. A "Labour" Government exists, and MacDonald is in power. Therefore, our little group of Communists must follow its historic path. They must first become a mass party; and secondly, begin to recruit workers into the Party and found a daily paper. When one talks to the English comrades about this, they say that this is asking them to wear a hat that is far too big for their head, and they are extremely worried about it. Thirdly, we must more thoroughly permeate the rank and file of the trade unions in order to form a left wing movement there. Fourthly, more attention must be paid to the youth. Until quite recently, there was no Young Communist movement at all in Britain, and it is even now only at its very beginning. Fifth, the colonial question must be attacked with audacity, such as befits Bolsheviks. Sixth, digressions to the right must be combated wherever they are met with; election

campaigns must be conducted differently, the lines proposed by Roamer must not be followed; in their propaganda they must be prepared even for a break. That is the most important problem for the British Party.

### **Development of the French Section.**

The next most important Party in the Communist International is the French Party, precisely because of the new international situation ("democratic pacifist") to which I have already referred.

I think the French Party has made great progress. It is far stronger than it has been. It has a sound left wing which we are supporting. What was formerly the "centre" must join with the left wing in forming a common "left" in the true sense of the Communist International, and without forming a fraction. The French Party must capture the large industrial centres in the country.

At present its only stronghold is Paris. This is important. In Brandler's old Central Committee it used to be said that they had everything else behind them except Berlin and Hamburg. But then it turned out that "everything else" was not behind them.

The French Party now holds Paris but has too little support in the provinces.

The chief task of the French Party at present is to get out into the industrial proletarian districts outside of Paris. In our activity we must take into account the illusions created by the victory of the left bloc. The French Social-Democrats have tried to be very cunning! They have not openly formed the government, but they will vote for the budget, the occupation of the Ruhr, etc. Actually it is part of the Government. We will be cunning, too. We will say to the Socialist workers: this is

not your government, your people are not in it; why should you worry about it, it is only a bourgeois government; why should we not fight it together for amnesty for the evacuation of the Ruhr, for higher wages, for the recognition of Soviet Russia, for the eight-hour day, etc? We must conduct the tactics of the united front skilfully. While the Social-Democratic leaders are engaged with their government combination, a favourable opportunity presents itself to get among the masses of the Social-Democratic and non-party workers and get them to combine with us.

Then the Social-Democrats will be crushed between these two combinations. The masses will become more discontented, unemployment will continue, the economic situation will grow worse, and the "Experts' Report" will not help the workers. This is an ideal situation for winning over the best section of the workers, particularly in France.

The most important task of the French Party is to win the individual centres outside of Paris and to extend and strengthen the Party apparatus. In Paris, we have 8,000 members, and yet we have 50,000 subscribers to *Humanité*, and we polled 300,000 votes at the elections. What does that mean? A decided backwardness in the Party organisation. We must accustom the French workers to different methods of organisation. The Federation of the Seine must in the near future have 25,000 members. The most important task of the French Party is to wipe out the last remnants of Frossardism. What was formerly the "Centre" must boldly and sincerely march together with the "Left." The French Party must utilise the excellent qualities of the Parisian workers to warn the workers in the provinces at the moment when the leaders of the Social-Democracy are engaged with governmental combinations with the bourgeoisie, The factory councils' movement in France is still in its infancy. People are too busy talking about "high politics." In the whole of France there are

only about 120 factory councils, such progress cannot be taken very seriously. Party nuclei and factory councils are only the first requirements of the French Party. There is no country in the world to which the policy of the Workers' and Peasants' Government is better adapted than France. It must penetrate deeper into the country, into the peasant cottages; we must have a good Communist press; a strong party apparatus; better international connections.

### **German Question Cleared up in the Main.**

Germany has been most written and spoken about this year. I, at any rate, do not see a particular German problem before us at the present moment. The situation is difficult, the general political perspective remains unchanged. It is pregnant with revolution; already giant conflicts have broken out. The German Communist Party is now on the whole marching along the route of the Communist International. The crisis went very deep, and there was the danger of a split. Our Polish comrades asked why we were in such a hurry to shake off the old Central Committee. Surely it is obvious that if we had hesitated at all the split would have become inevitable. (Fischer: Quite true!)

Then as to the other controversy with the "Extreme Left." At a moment when we had no idea how things might turn out we had to act, and even to over-rate the dangers a little. Even now we do not know its numerical strength, but we do know that they are Mensheviks turned inside out. At the moment, part of the problems have been solved. The new central Committee will repulse this liquidation from the "left," and I hope it will successfully manage them.

There are still very great difficulties in connection with the question on the Trade Unions. The Central Committee must resolutely suppress any attempt at "revising" the Frankfurt

resolutions, and to speak of leaving the trade unions. Nor is the parliamentary position simple. In both the French and German parliaments, we have a situation similar to that which Lenin used to call the “Pendulum” situation, where our group can at times have the decisive vote. This is bound to produce tactical difficulties for us both in France and in Germany. The Germans have also neglected the work among the peasants. This must be made good. I could quote a number of other minor tasks, but I shall not do so. The German Party has proved itself to have a robust constitution, which has withstood the onslaught of serious diseases. If the body had not been so sound and proletarian, we would have had still greater difficulties. If the ultra-left again try to emerge, we will resist it. If the old “left” deviation on the trade union question arises again, we will also resist them. The relations between ourselves and the Central Committee of the German Party is amiable and satisfactory, but there are no reasons why we should not combat any errors if they arise. We combated the “lefts” and we will, do so in the future. The German Party like every other Party has the right to criticise the Executive. It has made more than good use of this right. We have no use for blind followers. But the German Party also have no use for an Executive which does not openly say what is to be said. The Executive may and will criticise and rectify what it thinks necessary. I believe that the left elements, which are in the majority in the German Party, will admit that we acted correctly when the question of new tactics in the trade union movement was raised. Some may have believed that the Executive intended simply to hand over the German Party to the ultra-lefts, but they will now realise that they were mistaken. The Executive did no such thing and will never do such a thing. We always fought for Leninism even in the German Party. We are quite pleased that the new Central Committee agree with this.

### **The Czecho-Slovak Communist Party.**

Now for the Czech Party. I have already touched on this question and have not much more to add. I have the impression that the Czech Party lacks constant energetic revolutionary leadership. They work spasmodically. During elections or something of that sort—there is a revival; when it is finished—they go to sleep again. I think that the Czech Party has much to learn. The Central Committee should have fresh proletarian forces infused into it. The revisionist elements which are still in it must be rooted out. While I have some hopes that Comrade Hula will rectify the errors, I have no such hopes for Vanek. We need have no doubts about the good intentions of Comrade Smeral. But we must demand the elimination of the errors exposed in the passage of the Polish resolution which I quote, an error which has been uprooted in Germany, and in the whole Communist International. More attention than hitherto must be paid to the national and peasant questions—this applies particularly to the Czecho-Slovakian Party.

### **The Polish Section.**

And now for the other countries. I will begin with Poland. You know that for quite a long time, we regarded the Polish Section as one of the best Bolshevist sections of the Communist International. This is true with regard to the working class revolutionary traditions, and the splendid proletarian elements in Poland who are bearing all the burdens of illegal party work. I must openly state that things are not so well with the leadership. The leadership of the Polish Party indulged in too much diplomacy on the most important questions—determining the tactics of the Comintern, the German and the Russian questions. This gives food for sad



reflections. The Polish comrades are most familiar with the Russian conditions, and they also know the German conditions very well. Now, they say they completely accept the standpoint of the Central Committee on the Russian and on the German questions.

This statement has only one drawback—it comes a little too late. It is like bringing the mustard after the meal is cleared away. Perhaps mustard sometimes may be good after a meal, but we would rather enjoy it during the meal.

As regards the application of the tactics of the united front, the Polish comrade have admitted at their own conference that they made great mistakes. The work of Comrade Krulikowski in the Diet was repeatedly criticised in the Press. I must say that as far as I can follow his conduct, I consider it heroic, (Radek: Quite right!) correct, and revolutionary. One must not chide a comrade for an isolated minor digression; one must not forget the difficult position of the Party in a White Guard parliament. In general, Comrade Krulikowski is making use of parliament in the spirit of Karl Liebknecht. The rest are petty details.

I cannot refrain from saying a few words about the leadership of the Polish Party. Where was our Party during the rising in Cracow? It was not there at all. I do not say that a Party must always be in the majority, but, comrades, when regiments mutiny the Communist Party is completely absent, it gives us something to think about. Yes, it is true that the difficulties for work in Poland are immense; we know perfectly well what it means to do illegal work under such circumstances. We know the heroic work done by the members of the Central Committee in Poland. But the political head of the Central Committee indulges in diplomacy. Yes, diplomacy against our bourgeois enemies, the Social-Democrats, is a fine thing; but within our own fighting community, within the Communist International, we need no

diplomacy. I think in order to restore the good name of the Polish Section as one of the best Bolshevik parties, it is necessary to correct some of the faults of the Polish Central Committee.

### **The Italian Section.**

Now, comrades, we come to Italy. There we have two practical questions. First, the relationship towards the so-called “Terzi” Internationalists; secondly, the relation to the Socialist Party. I think we must decide upon an immediate union between the Terzi with the followers of the Third International. The time is ripe for it. Whether the “Terzi Internationalists” should be represented on the Central Committee of the party after the fusion I regard as a secondary question. Of course, they must help to form the Central Committee. We are not going to insist too stubbornly upon the 21 points where they are concerned. These comrades have been wanting to join the party for two years, and we said to them, Stay in the old Party! Capture it from within! With regard to the Italian Socialist Party, we must stand by our old decisions, that is, to leave the door open for them to come in as a sympathising party. During the discussions it was proved that behind “Avanti,” behind the Italian Socialist Party, there are still considerable sections of the workers. You will remember that at the Fourth Congress it was said by the “ultra lefts” that no workers supported this party, but only clerks, petty bourgeoisie, etc. But the last elections have proved beyond dispute that behind the Italian Socialist Party stand hundreds of thousands of good proletarians. Lazzari, Clerici, etc., are not Communists; they are sentimental revolutionaries. Not long ago I received a letter from old Lazzari in which he wrote that it was a question of conscience; on the one side there was his party, on the other the Executive of the International; he could not commit a breach of

discipline, but he remained loyal to the International. But I know that in the Italian Socialist Party there are hundreds of thousands of workers of whom many are with us. Vella appears to be politically dead for the Italian Socialist Party. This is roof that we must leave the door open and stick to our former decisions.

With regard to the Centrist elements in the Socialist Party, however, the fight against them must be continued.

With regard to the Italian Communist Party itself, the elections showed that it was, in spite of all, a very strong Communist Party with a sound political core. It deserves all our support. It is our hope; it is the only representative of the Comintern in Italy. But the weaknesses which we have criticised are still there. Recently it has again been proved that the views of the Communist International Executive were correct. You are aware of the fact that we have there three fractions. I don't know which of these fractions is actually in a majority. We must not be hasty in our judgment. But I do know that the extreme left fraction is politically wrong. Bordiga is asking us to confirm the Rome theses of 1922, dealing with the policy of the Italian Communist Party with regard to the "*Ardititi de Populo*," i.e., the very theses we criticised twenty times together with Comrade Lenin. For instance, of Bordiga's friends, Bossi, writes:

"A tactic is not a Communist tactic if it waits upon the situation for indications as to what its tactics are to be."

I ask, to what should we adapt our tactics if not to the concrete situation! Some of the "lefts" are so doctrinaire as to believe that we can get together and make decisions on principles alone which will serve as a sort of "elixir" to serve for all occasions. Of course, we must not change our tactics with every wind. But on the other hand, we must take facts into consideration. We remain Communists in all situations. That we must suit Communist tactics to facts is so obvious that there

is no need to talk about it. And only those comrades who have no feeling for the mass movement, who are not Marxists, will hold the contrary.

### **Our Pride—the Y.C.I.**

Just a few remarks on our Auxiliary-International and on the question of organisation. The Young Communist International is our pride and hope. It is an organisation which will give us a new generation of real Communists and real Communist leaders. In this we have already left the Social-Democrats behind. In Russia, the Young Communist League has increased its membership from 400,000 to 700,000; in Germany from 28,000 to 70,000. The German League has done excellent work in the Ruhr. The fight our youth is putting up is worthy of all praise. We are justified in saying that the Young Communist International is the right hand of the Communist International. Here, too, we have important work before us.

A few more remarks on other auxiliary Internationals. The Red Aid has done satisfactory work, and the same applies to the International Workers' Relief. You are aware that the Social-Democrats commenced a crusade against it and have decided to leave it. The Sports International has also some successes to record. We must strengthen our women's movement; we have done little in this connection.

### **Organisation Questions.**

As to the question of organisation, I think that the time has come to begin in all seriousness to reorganise our Parties on a factory nuclei basis. We are told that we shall lose members by it. But the workers must be told that the Party *must have* an

industrial basis. The present territorial system of organisation is a relic of Social-Democracy. The latter built up its organisations as an electoral machine for election purposes only, and wherever our Communist Parties still adhere to this system, we must say that they are not yet free from Social-Democratic ideology.

### **Question of Leadership Without Lenin.**

In conclusion just a few words on the future leadership of the International. Here I must quote Comrade Bordiga because he showed commendable courage in raising the following question. He says, literally, the following.

“Where is the guarantee that the International will become a world-Communist Party! The fact that the best comrades of the Russian Party take part in the Executive will not suffice because we have to deal with the historical situation. Deeds upon which we dared hitherto because we enjoyed the leadership of the genius of Lenin, we must now give up as dangerous to the Communist movement of the proletariat.”

Comrades, we need no ceremonies. We must say frankly that Bordiga is partly right on this question. We have no grudge against him if, now that we no longer have Lenin beside us, the universal confidence cannot be so boundless as it was, for we ourselves do not feel so confident as we did when our decisions were, so to speak, ultimately ratified by Comrade Lenin, when we knew that his decision would be so right, so objective, so wise, and so Marxian. It is our misfortune that we have lost the best head, the best man, and the most farsighted leader. This is bound to have tremendous effect in all respects. We also have become more circumspect.

But what are the conclusions to be drawn from this! We no longer have Lenin with us, nor anyone to take his place, but the

struggle of the world proletariat must be led. The conclusion to be drawn is this: The international leadership must be more collective. All the parties must give to the Executive the best disciples of Marx and Lenin, the best heads and the best organisers. What other means than these can we apply! Yes, we miss Lenin. To fill his place, we must draw upon the best forces from all of our Parties to organise the leadership of the International. But after having brought about this organisation, after having put the Executive on more international footing than hitherto, we should enforce not merely to formal discipline, but truly proletarian, Communist discipline. We have no grudge against Bordiga, we are not so foolish as to imagine that although Lenin is dead, everything will go on as usual. We ourselves appeal to you, comrades of all fraternal parties. Lenin is no longer with us, we must make collective efforts to replace him at least to some extent. We need the International for the emancipation of the working class; we must achieve a collective leadership, a steel leadership, which will really lead and which will embody the collective wisdom of the whole working class.

### **Cases of Violation of Discipline.**

During the period, we had cases of lack of discipline, some of which were left unpunished. For instance, from the right, Comrade Hoeglund, who was backed by Tammel, and from the Left from Bordiga, who refused to stand for parliament, although the Party and the Executive insisted on his doing so.

We tried to settle these cases quietly, because of the high esteem in which we held these comrades personally. Hoeglund, during the war, and Bordiga after the war, and now, have shown themselves to be good revolutionaries. I say frankly that if no guarantees will be furnished by the Congress, against a

repetition of such breaches of discipline, we cannot take all the responsibility. The discipline must be even more stringent than it was when Comrade Lenin was alive. We must not look backwards, we must look forwards and try to grow into a world party and to have an International Executive with an International leadership. Henceforth no one should dare talk of “formal” discipline; for this would put us on a level with the Two and a Half International. We would not be the heirs to Marx and Lenin; we would not be much better than Crispian. We must fight for a unified Communist Party, without fractions and groupings.

### **The Second International is Declining, Third International is in the Ascendant.**

Comrades, we need not be afraid to avow that we did not drop down from the skies, that we were born out of the womb of the Second International. Here and there bourgeois and petty bourgeois ideology is pressing in on us. This is the misfortune of our class. Had this not been so, we would have conquered the bourgeois Social-Democrats long ago. We must combat this danger with all vigour, with firmness and perseverance, worthy of revolutionists. Leninists must not fall into a panic when opportunism emerges from the right. We must explain errors, create a real Communist International. Fight and you will win. The Second International is numerically strong, but historically it is doomed. We used to state the case quite simply: the epoch of the Second International is at end; the epoch of the Third International has commenced. Historically this is true, but sociologically it cannot be stated so simply. For a number of years the two Internationals will live side by side, but we are in the ascendant. We shall win. But for this we must have iron discipline, a real Communist world-party, which the

Comintern must become. It was not in vain that we have pledged ourselves to work and fight in the spirit of Lenin. Like a real Communist world party, we must fight the opposition of the right, and point out the errors of the left. We must have a steel Communist leadership, because we have a great fight ahead. At the Fourth Congress we had no-inkling that in the following October we would have seriously to discuss the question of the German revolution.

Matters are coming to a head more quickly than we think, although it seems that progress is slow. It is quite clear that in the period between the Fifth and Sixth World Congresses we shall have to face decisive fights in many parts of the world. We must be ready to do everything in order to become, not in words, but in deeds, a real world-wide invincible Communist Party.



## **Fourth Session, June 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Chairman: COMRADE GEBHARDT**

**Speaker: COMRADE VARGA.**

### **World Economic Situation.**

The past three years have proved, that the basic idea of the theses of the Third Congress, namely, that the capitalist order of society is at present in a state of crisis, in which prosperity and crisis alternate, is correct. The idea of periods of crisis in capitalism is not easily defined. I would express it thus: by a period of crisis in capitalism, one understands a period in which the contradictions of capitalist society reach such a point that the unity of capitalist world economy is shattered, that production, which in normal capitalist conditions increases, stagnates, or declines, that in consequence it is no longer possible for the bourgeoisie to ensure the proletariat a rising standard of living, and that in consequence of this development, the objective possibility of successful, struggle for power is present. The bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats assert that the crisis of capitalist world economy is already overcome, or is about to be overcome. This opinion is false. In all probability, the crisis will this year take on especially severe forms.

In 1923, the best year of the post-war period, production did not reach the level of 1913.

In agriculture, it must be admitted that the area under cultivation is now to a large degree smaller than in 1913. The area under wheat in 1922 was less than before the war; for oats, 13 per cent., for barley 24 per cent., and for rye 8 per cent. less.

On the other hand, in the case of cotton, rubber, and other raw materials, we observe the conscious tendency of capitalism to restrict production, in order to raise prices. In the heavy industries, we find that coal production barely equals the pre-war level. The iron and steel industries are still far less productive than before the war. It is especially striking that the capacity of production in the heavy industries is not fully utilised. In England, out of 457 blast furnaces only 194 are in use, in America at the beginning of the present year, out of 420 blast furnaces, only 270 were in use, in May only 230, and at the present moment probably not more than 200. In Germany heavy industry has been at a standstill throughout the whole past year.

One of the most important features of this period of crisis, is unemployment. Peculiarly enough, in the most important capitalist countries, where, during this period a recovery of capitalist economy is said to have taken place, the number of unemployed has remained almost stationary. The number of unemployed is at present given as between 4 and 5 millions. These are the official figures which, in reality, are probably too low. Before the war, unemployment was a transient phenomenon, but now it is permanent. In England, there are large masses of workers who have already been unemployed for three years. If we examine the economic situation of the past year, we see the following three great new phenomena (1) The end of the united capitalist world economy; (2) A special crisis in the West European industrial countries within the general crisis of capitalist world economy; and (3) the agrarian crisis.

We must draw attention to the state of Russia, a gigantic country outside of capitalist economy, where the proletarian government is now so firmly established that even its bitterest opponents have no longer any hope of bringing about its downfall. Under the first point, there also falls the lack of any

united movement towards a boom in capitalist world economy. Improvement of the markets in individual countries is usually secured at the cost of a relapse in other countries. Out of this complex came the boom which America experienced recently. This American boom is an absolutely isolated phenomenon. It is significant that, just when this boom had reached its climax, America had an unfavourable trade balance. This proves that capitalist world economy is no longer an united whole.

France also has experienced a special boom, which was based upon the slow process of inflation, and also upon the necessity to rebuild the devastated areas. When this reconstruction is completed, this special boom in France will also come to an end.

A further characteristic feature of the decay of capitalist world economy is the currency position. A great deal is said about the stabilisation of the currency of Germany, Austria and Poland, but simultaneously with this stabilisation, a whole series of other countries have started upon the road of depreciation. There is now no single country in Europe whose currency stands at par with the dollar. And the general development is not in the direction of improvement, but in that of depreciation. Another important point is the complete standstill in the international movement of capital. In spite of the fact that interest on loan capital in Europe costs 40, 50, 60 and even 100 per cent. a year, while in America it is only 2, 3 or 4 per cent. No capital is flowing from America to Europe because the security is not considered good enough. Gold is flowing to the United States, where already such a reserve has been accumulated that it is not known what to do with it. Banknotes in America are already covered by more than 80 per cent. of gold, and if this process goes on, a state of affairs will occur when they will be covered by 100 per cent, and the issue of banknotes will no longer be a profitable business. At the same time European exchange values in consequence lack gold

backing, and undergo great fluctuations.

The trustification of industry, which made great strides during the war and post-war period, is the chief cause of the agrarian crisis. Nearly all manufactured articles are sold at artificially put up monopoly prices, while prices in the agricultural industry are still regulated by the ordinary markets, as it is impossible to amalgamate the millions of small agricultural producers into big concerns. The “scissors” themselves do not constitute all agrarian crisis. They become all agrarian crisis only where rent, interest on loans, and taxes are so high that the producers are no longer able to pay them because of the comparatively low price for agricultural produce.

Many farmers have left their farms and a large number of others retained their farms because of the mercy of the lending banks, which extended their credit rather than lose all they advanced through the farmers. But in many places these banks themselves went bankrupt.

In the European countries the agrarian crisis is also very acute. For a time, it was concealed by inflation, when agricultural producers could pay taxes, interest, etc., in depreciated currency. But as soon as stabilisation sets in, the agrarian crisis comes to the surface in all its intensity. In some countries it is no doubt possible that the agrarian crisis will be only a passing phase. In Germany, for instance, protective tariffs can mitigate the crisis.

The agrarian crisis has an enormous political significance, for it is an important factor in bringing the lower and middle classes of the peasantry close to the proletariat. It also enables us to get into closer political contact with these sections of the population.

The industrial crisis itself is also an important cause of the agrarian crisis. The fact that there are always millions of unemployed, and that wages have been forced as low as in the

last few years has decreased the demand for articles of food and other necessities of life in enormous degree.

All these examples go to prove that the clash of class interests has become very acute indeed. To my great surprise, Hilferding shares my views on this subject. How does this acuteness manifest itself?

1. The concentration of production, the centralisation of wealth and trustification have made great strides forward during the past few years. This was accompanied by an extensive expropriation of all middle classes of society, especially in countries with inflated currency. The gulf between the small group of dominating capitalists and the middle and petty-bourgeoisie is becoming wider. An increasingly large section of the petty-bourgeoisie is becoming proletarianised and a prey of capitalist exploitation.

2. Parallel with this, we see that the interests of big capital in the various countries interlace. On the one hand, there is the combination of the interests of Morgan, Creuzot and Stinnes, and on the other hand of the interests of Rockefeller and those of capitalist groups of various European countries. In this process dependence of the European nations on the United States is becoming more and more evident.

### **Immediate Prospects.**

One of the most serious crises the United States has ever had is just beginning. This crisis could be foreseen, in fact we expected it at the end of 1923. According to news received from America, there is an unprecedented decrease of production in the United States. For instance, the Steel Trust worked to full capacity by the end of May. There are one million unsold motor cars. Building construction fell in May by 23 per cent., and in New York even by 70 per cent., etc.

American manufactured articles are now thrown on the European market and compete sharply with European industries. We, therefore see that if European industries were not affected by the American boom of 1923, the present crisis is bound to be felt by them.

At first, efforts were made to obtain reparations from Germany in foreign exchange. But this attempt led to the collapse of German currency. It undermined German capitalism and brought with it the danger of a proletarian revolution or a nationalist *coup d'état*. It soon became evident that the reparations question could not be solved in this manner. It was, however, not only an economic question, but also a question of political power. The reparations conditions are calculated to eliminate Germany as an independent State and to turn it into the object of the plans of the big imperialist powers.

There are two conflicting opinions on the matters. First, the conception of the military and heavy industry circles of France which was as follows: dismemberment of the Ruhr, and of the left bank of the Rhine, economically, as well as politically, establishment of a West European heavy industrial centre, and French hegemony over the Continent of Europe.

This imperialist conception constituted, a great danger for Great Britain as it might result not only in a military, but also in an economic supremacy of France over Great Britain. The other, the British conception, took into account that the present military superiority of France made it impossible for Great Britain to oppose the imperialist French designs by force. Therefore, Great Britain is content to incite Germany and France against each other in order to weaken them both and to be able to dictate terms. Naturally, Great Britain wanted also to weaken Germany. If the burden of reparations were to be made comparatively easy for the German bourgeoisie, German

industries would compete with British industries, as the German bourgeoisie was able to pay all its internal debts during the period of inflation.

The "Experts' Report" is an attempt of the Entente bourgeoisie to solve the reparations question in common. It pursues a double aim: (1) to prevent the proletarian revolution, or a national revanche action, and to let the German bourgeoisie live, but (2) to live, in such a way that the Entente bourgeoisie keeps the control over Germany in its own hands, thereby preventing dangerous competition on the part of the German bourgeoisie. This would convert Germany into a colony of the Entente bourgeoisie.

Politically the defeat of the French policy of coercion and the victory of the English American line of policy, represents a coalition from Morgan to Paul Levi, for the prevention of the proletarian revolution.

But the essential conditions of recovery will be lacking since Germany will be unable to sell abroad the goods necessary for the payment of reparations, without causing a severe crisis in English and French industry. Thus, I do not believe that Hilferding's hopes are justified.

It is interesting that the Social-Democrats are so optimistic. It is certainly natural, since the business of the Social-Democratic Parties is to induce the masses of the proletariat to refrain from revolutionary methods. This optimism of the Social Democrats is not shared in English economic circles. In the statements of leading English political economists, we find a complete hopelessness. In connection with this there is in England, on the one side, a revival of Malthusianism, and on the other side, emigration to the colonies is being preached. America, on the other hand, is prohibiting immigration. This shows, that the bourgeoisie of the United States itself does not hope for an unlimited continuation of the upward tendency. Politically, this prohibition of immigration represents a

coalition between the aristocracy of labour, the Fascist organisations and the American upper bourgeoisie, for the evolutionary working class elements, of those inclined towards devolution.

Summing up, we may sketch the following outlook for the year 1924-1925: severe crisis in America together with a worsening of economic situation in Europe. The possibility of successful proletarian struggles remains. And it depends upon the Communist Parties what form these struggles will take. If, however, we do not succeed in uniting the working masses in building up the steel framework of the Party, and in winning over the peasants, this objective possibility may pass by. And then comes the possibility. I say possibility and not probability—that capitalism will temporarily find a way out of this crisis at the cost of the proletariat. The task of the proletariat is to make use of the possibility of revolutionary struggles, and to prevent this second possibility. (Applause.)



## **Fifth Session, June 20th (Evening)**

**Chairman: GEBHARDT.**

**Speaker: TREINT, RWAL, MURPHY, PETROVSKY.  
ROY.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and Report on the World Economic Situation.**

The Congress proceeded to the discussion of the two reports already heard. The first speaker was Comrade Treint (France).

France is resorting to inflation in order to repay her short term obligations (Treasury bonds and the Morgan loan). She is entering on a period of high cost of living because prices on her markets are tending to rise to the level of world prices.

In these circumstances the Party must be prepared for its tasks and will be so if it rallies round the Left, the strength of which has been emphasised by Comrade Zinoviev. The latter, in his statements on international questions at the Congress, has pointed out the way for the French Party.

The fight against the Experts' Report must be not only a French and a German fight, but a fight of the whole Communist International, and must consist not only of negative criticism but of positive slogans. The World Congress must adopt a resolution on this subject before separating.

Zinoviev touched on the question of trade union unity.

Trade union unity is not a question of principle, but of tactics. If historical circumstances place trade union unity and that interests of the revolution in contradiction, we shall choose the revolution.

But we are not in such a situation.

We think that the United General Confederation of Labour must be internationalised, on the question of unity. We must return to International trade union unity in order to convene a world congress of all the trade unions with the right of all tendencies to be organised in a united trade union international.

On the question of the united front they are in complete agreement with Zinoviev. The Workers' Government is a synonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat intelligible to all workers.

We formally condemn the Saxony errors.

There is an international Right which has revealed itself on the German question and on the English question.

The Communist International must carry on the fight against all digressions either to the Right or to the Left.

Comrade Rwal (Germany): Since the October period the German Party and the Communist International put the question of the seizure of power as acute. But the Party was not in a position to make objective use of this period. In Germany, there is not a single class conscious worker unaware of the fact that at that time the fight could have been made.

Hitherto the Party, from the standpoint of organisation, was more of a Social-Democratic machine than a Bolshevik organisation. Every honest worker is aware today of the fact that the Party must seek support in the most important centres. Our task is to unite the two revolutionary poles of Germany, from the Ruhr district to Upper Silesia, from Hamburg on to Halle and Bavaria, with Berlin as the centre, creating something like a German Leningrad and Moscow. Until now the Party could not put up a better fight for it because it acted on a wrong basis.

The German revolution is closely connected with the questions of Polish and Czecho-Slovakian Parties. It took the Polish Party two months to decide to disallow Krulikowsky's vote in support of six months' military duty, although he

delivered some fine revolutionary speeches in Prague. And such questions are of paramount importance to us in Upper Silesia.

We have already started a fight against the "Experts' Report." We have strikes in the Ruhr lasting for weeks; we are fighting in Upper Silesia. The peasants are backing us in struggles, and tens of thousands of women join with us in the fight. We may further record an active fight against the fascists. We have not yet won the eight hour day, but we shall win it, and this will frustrate the plans of the experts.

Comrade Murphy (England) said that Comrade Zinoviev's main point appeared to be the question of the united front. It appeared that many comrades were still in doubt about this policy, or wished for its modification. He had the support of the British Party in stating that it would be a great mistake to drop it. Many of the mistakes which had been committed under this policy were due to the fact that most of our Parties were only just becoming Communist Parties. Comrade Zinoviev had said that the most important task was the creation of a mass party in Great Britain. This was impossible without the maintenance of the united front policy. In reply to the criticism of Comrade Zinoviev and others with regard to the Kelvingrove election and of Comrade Newbold, Comrade Murphy observed that the British Party admitted its errors and weaknesses, but there was another side. The enemies of the British Party accused it of responsibility for the defeat of Labour at Kelvingrove by making the election campaign "too Communist" and thereby awakening the distrust of the masses in the Labour Government.

It was important to distinguish between the British Party's relations to the Labour Government, and to the Labour Party. Comrades abroad, who seemed to confuse these two points, demanded that the British Party should leave the Labour Party because of the actions of the Government. He admitted that the

attitude of the Party, in the first days of the Labour Government, was weak, inclining merely to go with the tide of popular opinion, and to demand only the fulfilment of the election programme. But as time passed, and the Labour Party became more corrupt and was revealed as the tool of the bourgeoisie, the Communist Party's opportunities for criticism developed.

To demand the abandonment of the united front on grounds such as those given was an error. The Labour Party was not identical with the Labour Government, but was the organised working class movement in Great Britain, and those who proposed leaving the Labour Party, were proposing that we should leave the working class.

Dealing with other arguments, Comrade Murphy asked what, if we dropped the united front, was to become of the minority movements. He supported the claim that the British Party although small, is becoming a mass party, by the instance of its activity in the recent railway strikes, and in securing the election of A. J. Cook as the miners' secretary. The united front, he declared finally, was fundamental to the existence of the British Party at this stage, and could not be discarded.

Referring to Comrade Zinoviev's criticism on the Kelvingrove election campaign, Comrade Petrovsky pointed out that while this much-criticised campaign was going forward, the Communist Party's conference was taking place in Manchester; and this conference passed a resolution declaring the MacDonald government a sham, and pointing out that it was following in the footsteps of Scheidemann and Noske, the German Social-Democrats executioners. Comrade Petrovsky also quoted from the Independent Labour Party newspaper, *Forward*, to show that in this election the forces of the I.L.P. and the Labour Party were on the one side, appealing to the bourgeoisie, and on the other the Communist Party was appealing to the workers.

Comrade Murphy was right when he said that to break away from the Labour Party was to break away from the working class movement. The leaders of the Labour Party would be glad if we did this, and we ourselves would be forsaking our best field of activities.

Finally, Comrade Petrovsky dealt with the question of the Communist press in Britain. The power of the bourgeois press monopoly was, he declared, stronger in Britain than in any other country. Nevertheless, the attempt to establish a Communist workers' daily should be made, for it was a shame that in Britain there should be only one daily, and that not the herald of the workers, but the herald of the servants of the king.

Comrade Roy (India), said that the emphasis on the importance of the English question, in Comrade Zinoviev's speech was opportune, but belated. The stronghold of bourgeois dictatorship was now England, and if we did not take note of this we should not reach our desired goal of world revolution. The English bourgeoisie was now taking the lead towards the recovery of the bourgeoisie throughout the world. Hence the necessity for a strong British Communist Party, but a statement of the necessity left us a long way from achievement of the fact.

We tended to forge the fact that the British Isles were only the apex of a much greater economic and financial domain. If we ignore the existence of the roots which fed this central body, we should continue to make mistakes. We must remember the historical development of the British working class. We know that the British Labour movement, developed simultaneously with British imperialism. The British proletariat is soaked through and through with the spirit of British imperialism. The British Communist Party must get to grips with this fact. Hitherto the British Party has failed to find the way to grapple with this problem, and the Communist International has not showed it the way. To give this lead to the

British Party is now the task of the Communist International.

The task of the British Communist Party transcended the boundaries of the British Isles. Because of the fact that the British bourgeoisie depends upon the existence of a proletariat which is bribed at the expense of workers in the other parts of the British Empire, the British Party must make its activities “imperial” in scope. The formation of the desired mass Communist Party could not be accomplished only by activity in England, but must be achieved by activity throughout the Empire.

## **Sixth Session, June 21st**

**Chairman: COMRADE TREINT.**

**Speaker: ROSSI, SMERAL, RADEK.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Economic Situation.**

**Comrade Rossi (Italy):** There was a stereotyped phrase, which everybody repeats, regarding the existence of an Italian left, which is suffering from fractionism and abstractions and which inclines to utter vague formulas—a group of comrades who are cranky on a kind of critical philanthropy or semi-literary Marxism. We assert that there is not a trace to be found of such tactics in the whole of our work, and at the very worst, we could only be accused of wanting to find definite actual forms within the framework of general policy. That is just the opposite of what we are accused of.

We reject the interpretation which the Enlarged Executive of February, 1922, gave to our own theses on this subject; this interpretation is incorrect as anybody can see who takes the trouble to read the original text of their own theses. The theses read as follows:

The whole of our tactics after August 1st, 1921, was directed towards developing the slogan of the united front from below. All differences on this question within our party are the same as within other parties of the Comintern, between the opportunists seeking for collaboration and even liquidation, and those who are seeking to maintain the revolutionary level within the party and among the masses, and to secure the autonomy of a Communist Party.

Comrade Zinoviev declared that the E.C.C.I. sometimes

made mistakes in the definition of this slogan. But on this subject the last clear word has not yet been said, Comrade Zinoviev returned to the first definition and said that the workers' government was synonymous with the dictatorship of the proletariat. We can accept this definition as we accepted it in June, 1922. We must add that the effective form of the slogan of the workers' government is the forceful seizure, the direct seizure of political power by the proletariat. We must define the practical significance of this slogan so as to avoid the serious errors to which it has given rise.

When the Communist World Party has laid down its policy in simple, elementary, logical and understandable lines, we shall never be faced with the dilemma which Comrade Zinoviev has faced us with, and which Comrade Treint all too light-mindedly has repeated: Bordiga or the International.

**Comrade Smeral (Czecho-Slovakia):** Our Party is, of course, not a real Bolshevik Party, and this applies to all Parties of the Communist International, with the exception of the Russian Party. An analysis of our actions and an exposition of what should have been done, but was left undone, gives scope for criticism. But the examples cited by Comrade Zinoviev have been partly misunderstood and partly overestimated. His estimate of the attitude of the leading body of the Party in the election campaign in Carpathian-Russia is not true to facts.

The Czech Communist Party has today a membership of 130,000 in a country with 13½ million inhabitants; it is avowedly the strongest workers' party, which in some parts of the country has gained control over the peasantry. It seems to me that this does not tally with the accusation of apathy made against the leaders of the Party. There is also disintegration in the ranks of the two most important social-patriotic parties, which is entirely due to the action and special campaign organised by our Party with the object of exposing the true



character of these parties. Our campaign against corruption has led to a severe crisis in the coalition government and in the various government parties.

During the revolutionary crisis in Germany, the Central Committee endeavoured to make the German revolution the centre of all our Party activities and of our Press campaign. That 35 to 40 per cent, of the enfranchised soldiers voted for our candidates at the last municipal election, shows that our propaganda within the army has not been without success. Another proof that our Party is by no means passive, is *the number of soldiers* who are now in prison.

With respect to Comrade Zinoviev's criticism of the theses of our last Party Congress (held in the beginning of February, 1923) on the Workers' Government, I should like to say that these theses were adopted unanimously and with the approval of the representative of the Executive, I do not wish to imply by this that these decisions and theses of the Comintern and of our Party are to be our only guide also in the future. We do not look upon the workers' government as a long-lived institution, nor as a means of evading a revolutionary fight for power. In connection with united front tactics, all our efforts to establish an united front from the top have failed. But on the other hand, we have already had some success in united front tactics from below. We think that under present circumstances we must work more energetically than ever for the united front from below, and that the higher organs of the reformists should not be approached by us with united front proposals unless such collaboration were connected with actions on a large scale among the masses.

The next speaker was **Comrade Radek**. He said:

"Comrade Zinoviev's speech, which, in my opinion, represents the annulment of the resolution of the Fourth Congress on the united front (interruption: Oh, oh!) has induced me to put my point of view, which, because of the

unanimous decision of the Russian Communist Party against my views, I should otherwise have hesitated to do.

Four questions are presented here. (1) How do our united front tactics arise, what were they and what are they? (2) What experiences have we gained in the last year with regard to the united front, particularly in Germany? (3) What is the present situation, and what is to be done? (4) What is the situation in the Communist International, and how must Communist tactics be defined within our parties?

I shall begin with the origin of the united front policy. Comrade Zinoviev makes two assertions in explanation of the history of the united front. The first is, that in the year 1919-20, the Communist International, in the West, outside Russia, consisted of small propaganda parties and groups, and that we first became mass parties in the year 1921. This statement is incorrect. In 1919 our small Communist party in Germany stood at the height of greater revolutionary mass struggles than since the year 1920. In Bavaria we conquered power and defended it. We had our small Hungarian Party which achieved power and defended it by arms for four and a half months.

What is the united front and what is the watchword of workers' and peasants governments? For Zinoviev this is quite simple. The Russian peasant understands no Latin, he does not know what the dictatorship of the proletariat is, and this watchword has, therefore, been translated, first into Russian, then into German and into English, etc.

On the basis of our Latin, we have, in the years 1918, 1919, and 1920 torn away great masses of the Social-Democrats, and after the Halle Conference we became a mass party. Since then, however, in the year 1921, we translated the Latin words 'dictatorship of the proletariat' into German, we sit at each Congress and attempt to explain to ourselves what this translation means (Interruption: Opportunistic translation). With the year 1920, with our defeat in Poland, our defeat in

Italy, with the world economic crisis, which made plain the way for the capitalist offensive, began the so-called new stage, which we announced at the Third World Congress. We said to ourselves, now call together again the masses which are in retreat, and out of sentimental Socialists we must make Communists and hard fighters. To this end we first adopted the united front, and secondly, sought for the watchwords for this united front. After the Halle Party Conference, every German Communist felt that we had already drawn to ourselves the workers who were for the dictatorship, that meanwhile the great masses would not be won by the propaganda of the watchword of dictatorship; and that we must win them over by putting forward general slogans in their daily struggles. The situation was not immediately understood by the comrades. It is a historical fact that a number of comrades considered the "open letter" of January 8<sup>th</sup>, as opportunistic. Only as a result of the intervention of Comrade Lenin were directions for the united front and the "open letter" included in the resolutions of the Third Congress. There were differences on the Executive, with regard to the requirements of the transition period, the confiscation of capital, the taxation programme, and the question of the workers' and peasants' government.

What was the position of the workers' and peasants' government question at the Fourth Congress! Comrade Zinoviev has explained here how much he felt that the watchword of a workers' government as a coalition with other workers' parties, might be opportunistic. But he gave way (I do not know if it was because I induced him to); but it came about that, in the meeting of the Commission at the Fourth Congress, Gretchen, under the flattery of Faust, sinned for a moment. Comrades, however flattering the role of Mephistopheles or even of Faust may be to me I must uproot this legend. Here is the first draft of Comrade Zinoviev's resolution. This draft contains, unfortunately not only the first transgression of

Comrade Zinoviev, which he has already read out, but a second. In this draft, Comrade Zinoviev wrote: "When we are defending the united front, Communists must not hesitate under certain circumstances, to form a government in conjunction with non-Communist parties." The second passage is much better. It says: "Communists do not hesitate to make agreements with other parties, even if the leaders of these parties are Social-Democrats or even Christian Socialists. (Brandler: Very sensible.)"

Up to this day I think it is sensible. This mention of Christian Socialism came from a preference for certain leaders of the German centre who had said that it was possible that even the Christian Socialists might take part in a workers' government.

In this resolution, Comrade Zinoviev's two transgressions, as I have calculated, multiplied into seven transgressions. All were, as usual, the results of the first sin. The form of the resolution makes it clear to us also that the Leipsic and Prague resolution is nothing more than a repetition of this resolution.

In the resolution it is stated, among other things: "The Communists, in opposition to an open or disguised bourgeois-democratic coalition, present an united front of all workers, and the coalition of all workers' parties on the economic and political field, to fight against the bourgeois power and to lead to its final overthrow.

"... Even a workers' government, which arises from a parliamentary origin can create the opportunity for the establishment of revolutionary workers' movements.

"... Communists under certain circumstances, declare their readiness to form a workers' government in co-operation with non-Communist workers' parties and workers' organisations."

Bukharin, in his report to the Russian Party Congress last year, represented the failure of the left-wing comrades to perceive that one must proceed to the dictatorship by stages, as

a left digression. (Friemuth: On the contrary.)

We shall see. Friemuth says that he will proceed through dictatorship to the Saxon Workers' government.

(Friemuth: You say that.)

It is said: It is not a matter of abstract formulae. The workers do not make these divisions. Of what do the masses of the workers, not only the Communists, think, when they speak of a workers' government? In England, they think of the Labour Party. In Germany, in the countries where capitalism is in collapse, the workers say: the united front means that Communists and Social-Democrats do not fight against each other during strikes, but co-operate. The idea of the workers' government has the same meaning for the working masses. They think of a government of all workers' parties.

At the Fourth Congress of the Communist International we declared that in the interests of the *revolution it might be necessary*: 1. To propose to the mass of the workers to enter into a coalition even with the Social-Democrats. 2. To be ready in certain circumstances actually to carry out in practice and not merely to agitate for it. And how was that understood? It is not only Comrade Smeral who does not find himself in a very cheerful position at the moment, who had reason to excuse himself on the ground that he was seduced. Quite a number of the comrades have been seduced by the influence of our Comrade Zinoviev. I have in my hand an article published by Comrade Kleine on the first of February, 1923. In this article which is a polemic against the "Left" written before the Party Congress and before Brandler's thesis had been published he says: The readiness which *recently we have so often shown* to take the final decisive step by joining the common fight for the interests of the proletariat in *company* with the *reformist parties, is not a trick*, it is not a tactical manoeuvre, but a sheer fact. And in the same way the possibility which we have faced of a workers' government is not a trick or an artifice."

“Simply because the workers’ government is not as yet a proletarian dictatorship but only the government of a Labour party which has to rely on the extra-parliamentary fighting organisation of the United Front, deviations in its policy are inevitable.”

That is what Comrade Kleine said before the Party Congress. Since that time we have been through our experiences in Saxony and our chairman, Comrade Treint, has written an article on the results of the elections in France. This article ends with the words: The Workers’ Government is a step towards the dictatorship.” He has also written an article for the special congress number of the “Communist International,” in which he again says that it is not a dictatorship but merely a stage forward. Yesterday he got up here and said he was “in perfect agreement with Zinoviev, that his form of workers’ government is admirable, that, in short, the Workers’ Government is the dictatorship of the proletariat in evolution.”

(Exclamation from the German delegation, “A good road to improvement.”)

But it is not a question of who is in the wrong and who is in the right. Comrade Zinoviev is quite right when he says that at the Fourth Congress we took a step which was opportunistic whether we knew it or not; we can still learn something from that.

I will now pass to the second part of the Report—to our experiences.

After the events in Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Communist Party proposed to the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party, which had at one time supported Zankow, to form a bloc. That is the first point. Next we decided here that the German Party was to take part in the Saxon government. After the Saxony defeat, our French comrades, with our consent, offered to form an election alliance with the Social-Democratic Party in France, where this is only possible by putting forward common

tickets. Comrades, let us first examine the two steps which were taken without any catastrophe resulting, where a bloc was not formed, because the opposition did not wish it. People talked in this sort of way: "Comrades, the government is the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is a synonym; it is a pseudonym." It always understood that one used a pseudonym when one wanted to conceal something. But if I say, my name is Hasse, but I am Radek, then surely comrades, this has no sense.

Now for the third point to be explained. How are the Social-Democrats to be unmasked? We know that the Social-Democrats can and will fight. But we propose to them that they should fight with us in order that we may then unmask them. Comrade Treint knew perfectly well that the Social-Democrats would never join with us in forming a bloc, and so we were able to permit ourselves the luxury of offering them this union. They have refused it, therefore, they now stand unmasked. But we rather spoil the effect of the unmasking when we announce beforehand: "Our object is not a common struggle, what we are out for is to unmask you." The whole point of our tactics in the United Front consists in our being genuinely and honestly ready to go a bit of the way with every working class party which is ready for a fight.

(Exclamation: "But the Social-Democrats will never fight.")

We should be trampling the interests of the working class underfoot if we did not honestly and without reservation aim at the unity of the proletariat at every stage of its battle.

Comrades, if the Executive allowed the Bulgarian and the French to do this, it cannot turn round now and say: This was a proposal made with good intentions; but we knew all along that it would not be accepted."

In September, we decided that the German comrades should enter the Saxon Government. They did enter it, and the

whole Executive was convinced that they had managed the affair very badly. We had suffered a crushing defeat. And what did Comrade Zinoviev write about our defeat? In his pamphlet on "The Problem of the German Revolution," he says in the introduction, which was written after the defeat:

"The comrades who look only at the situation in Germany are making the mistakes of provincials, they have not got their perspective right. The Saxon experiences were not accidental, and they were not useless to the Party. (Hear, hear!) The most important task in Germany is to capture the workers who support the Left-wing of the Social-Democracy—the present Left-wing of the social democracy is playing the same part as the Independent Socialists played in 1920. The masses of the workers are clinging to the Left Social-Democrats to bring the country out of its crisis by peaceful means."

Even after the Saxon experiences, Comrade Zinoviev did not hold our entry into the government to have been a mistake, but even though it brought defeat to our party he regards it as a great victory.

Comrades, I come now to the examination of the Saxon experiences. What did they consist of? Comrade Zinoviev does not criticise the Communist Party for not deciding to enter upon the struggle for power in October. He says in his thesis that it was right to avoid this, because we had no arms. He says, too, "Since uprisings and civil war are not undertaken in order to provide opportunities for an heroic death, but in order to win victory, it was wise not to attempt them." How does he criticise the attitude of the Party? He says that when we went into the Saxon government and it became evident that we could not grasp power, we should at least have demanded, the arm of the proletariat and the socialisation of industry, and that if the Social-Democrats would not join with us in fighting for this, we should have broken with them and left them. He criticised Fritz Heckert for making a speech in which he said that he



stood by the Constitution. Comrade Heckert should not have said that. It was nonsense to say that because his adversaries did not believe him. All over the country the party had spread manifestoes—"Workers, Arm Yourself."

Comrades, the Saxon affair is no comedy. It is a tragic-comedy and not a parliamentary tragic-comedy, but the tragic-comedy of a Communist Party which has not learned to prepare for battle.

What is the lesson of the experiences in Saxony? The lesson which we must learn if we are to avoid further defeats? The lesson is, first, that one cannot take a jump unless one has a jumping-off ground. One cannot, all at once, enter upon elections which require a considerable time for their development, and which involve the masses of the people.

The second lesson is still more important. I am in absolute agreement with Comrade Zinoviev that one cannot have an united front from above unless one has it from below. And it was the united front from below which we had not organised; our factory councils were divided, they were nothing but separate atoms. The Central Committee governing the factory councils was no better than a shadow and we had not bound them to our party.

If the Saxon government had relied upon the congress of factory councils... (Fischer: Why was it not together?")

That is just the mistake which I admit. (Fischer: "We asked for it six times!")

That points the moral: without a mass organisation, a workers' government is doomed. It must end either with a fight or with a defeat.

What light do these experiences throw upon the questions whether in certain circumstances we should enter into a coalition government with the Social-Democrats, in order to further our revolutionary ends?

I do not think that Comrade Zinoviev will refuse to consider this problem, for to do so would mean that we relinquish all hopes of fruitful mass agitation among the Social-Democratic workers and can show them no way of escape.

To say that the question is one of reform or revolution is nothing but a rhetorical phrase which nobody who has any grasp of the situation could take seriously. What we are concerned with is what Zinoviev summed up in the phrase: Finding a way for the future.

Now I want to say a few words about the organisation of the Revolution. The organisation of the revolution may mean that correct Communist tactics are adopted from the first moment when even a group of Communists are occupied in rallying the workers for the revolution, in *organising them for the fight*, and in organising preparations for the fight until they become so wise that they grow into the party of the revolution. Or it may mean that we have reached a situation when we can calculate that within a given time, that is to say, in the next months, or in the next weeks, we shall enter upon the decisive battle. To say this means that one must force the pace of the struggle to an extraordinary degree, it demands the most intensive concentration upon military preparations.

(Turning to the German comrades.) Comrades, you are simply talking in the air when you say we are ready to lead the masses in their struggle every day! In that case why don't you lead the masses every day into the struggle for power! Why do you wait, if you can lead the mass of the "Workers in their struggle every day? (Freimuth: We do lead the masses in their struggle every day, in whatever struggle is the order of the day.)

Comrade Freimuth says we lead the struggle for power every day, just as it comes along. That means, everyone of our struggles is a struggle for power. Quite true! But what is being

said generally, is that the German Communist Party is ready at any moment to lead the proletariat in the struggle for complete power. (Severing: Quite true!)

I say, if you are ready for it every day, and do not do it you are traitors to the German proletariat. Comrades, behind this dispute is a serious matter. Comrade Zinoviev has said in his report that in the important centres in France and Germany, we are advancing towards winning the majority of the proletariat. That is the kernel of the question. If Comrade Zinoviev asserts that, he is mistaken. And this error together with the idea of our left comrades, who declare that they are ready every day to take up the struggle for complete power.... (Interruption: Ready, ready!) one is not ready to do that which one cannot do.

If the French comrades were so strong why was there only one demonstration in Paris, when the Ruhr workers were shot by the French troops! Comrade Treint writes very pertinently in an article in the *Communist International*: "The great majority of the French proletariat is still filled with pacifist and democratic illusions." And in Germany! I believe, comrades, that the Congress will have the opportunity of considering in Commission one fact after another concerning not only the present transient situation in the German Party, but that which is developing.

A fraction numbering sixty-two people represent four millions of workers who have been through all the tribulations of illegality, enter the Reichstag, for the first time, and what happens? We hear a few parliamentary speeches which I will not describe here.

When the Experts' Report which is to enslave the German proletariat, comes before the Reichstag, it is the duty of the Communist Party entering parliament as agitators, not to spout general speeches, but to give an answer which will be echoed in millions of hearts of the Germans. And you have not done that.

I pass to a wider question, our work in the trade unions. The central question here is: shall we capture the trade unions, shall we draw the masses together or not! That will be decided by whether we are a radical party protesting in parliament, or whether we are a mass party preparing the revolution. I beg Comrade Losovsky, who perhaps knows the subject better, and officially ought to know about German trade union affairs to come up here and say what he thinks about the direction our work is taking in the trade unions.

Comrades, you will say that the capitalists throw our comrades out of work, they become, unemployed, and cannot pay their contributions; they leave the trade unions. You will say that Amsterdam is kicking us out. That is true. The question is: shall we avoid everything which would matter that easier for them or shall we do everything to make it impossible for them.

Comrades, the resolution of your party conference on the trade union question clears the way for leaving the trade unions.

The Russian comrades, who very often, like all of us, may make mistakes are practical exponents of the working class movement. Zinoviev declares a thousand times that he will nevermore make a coalition with the Social-Democrats, when it will be necessary to do so; he will only declare that the situation has changed, and that it is only a manoeuvre, while the other fellow, the wicked, has opportunistic designs. The result of the discussion of differences should still allow everyone, who may disagree with this or that decision, to remain in the party, subject to its discipline. We must not hesitate at criticism, otherwise we would be an organisation of cliques which carries on its business behind the scenes. But after we have fought here, we have the duty and the opportunity to work positively, wherever the Executive of our party places us, and to leave it to time and their experience to

show whether we have erred in on respect and they in another.  
(Applause in a part of the Congress.)



## **Seventh Session, June 21st (Evening)**

**Chairman: COMRADE TREINT.**

**Speakers: RUTH FISCHER, WENGEL,  
BOSHKOWITCH.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Economic Situation-(Contd.).**

The Chairman called upon Ruth Fischer to speak.

Comrade Ruth Fischer (Germany): The German Party expects from this Fifth World Congress international judgment on the experiences in Germany. Next to the Russian Party, the German Party is considered to be the most experienced party and the most capable of struggle. And what the German party has experienced in recent years places it next to the Russian Party. And if this party can make such catastrophic mistakes as were made last October, the International must seriously examine the causes which led to this. The causes do not rest with individual persons but are much deeper; opportunistic mistakes, which are also present in other parties, the resistance to which is the chief task of the International. Radek is wrong when he appeals to the Fourth Congress. The Fourth Congress could not look back upon such experiences as we can now, but it saw the dangers of the Right, and attempted to take up the struggle against them.

The workers' government was put forward as an agitational watchword, and reconciliation with the Left-wing elements was attempted. (In spite of the fact that we had such

an impossible left, as that of Czecho-Slovakia) only because it had behind it the feeling of revolutionary workers. And that was symptomatic in the Fourth Congress. The Leipsic and Prague Party Congresses, however, reached decisions which were the opposition of those of the world congress. The Leipsic Congress drove the Party to the verge of a split. Radek was not only silent about that, but he concealed an important episode in the Fourth Congress. When the false news came that Brandler and Bottcher had already entered the Saxon Government the German delegation was prepared to allow all the conditions, the arming of the workers, and the factory councils' congress to lapse. Only the Executive prevented that. Under the leadership of Brandler, the German party developed so that the danger of the separation of left groups arose. Brandler was prepared to abandon the Berlin, Hamburg and some Ruhr organisations, in order to realise his objects. The Executive prevented that.

It is now a question what manoeuvres are permissible and what are permissible. Radek stands the matter on its head. It is a question of Right-wing digressions, which were present in the German Party, and not of individual backslidings. What Brandler and Radek built up was opportunism which revealed itself in the action in Saxony. The policy which the Communist Party put forward to the Social-Democrats had been worked out years before, and it tended not to the dictatorship of the proletariat, not to the struggle for power, but to compromises. The conviction which lies at the basis of this policy is that these comrades have lost faith in the European revolution. In October, Radek wrote an article in *Pravda*, in which expression was given to a mood of absolute despair, and of the abandonment of the German revolution.

This conception gained more and more ground. It resulted in avowedly liquidating tendencies (Levi, Friesland) and was given a definite form in the theses of the Leipsic Party

Congress on workers' government within the framework of bourgeois democracy. The Rathenau action fore-shadowed the Saxon policy, the weakening of Communist principles--alliance with the German Socialist Party. In April, 1923, Brandler presented a classical formulation of his particular policy which was tantamount to a complete liquidation of Communist policy. He advocated a policy which, in conjunction with social democracy and also with the support of the Labour aristocracy, attempts to establish the workers' government in the framework of democracy.

This systematic revision of Communism, which the Executive considered as mere inaccuracies of style, as clumsy formulae, had also their economic counter-part in the proposal of a 51 per cent. confiscation of capital. None of us were against partial demands in general. But the question is that the slogan of the 51 per cent. confiscation of capital was so discredited in the eyes of the workers that it could not expect to meet with any response. Moreover, Radek and other comrades did not use this slogan as a tactical slogan for the purpose of agitation, but made it into an economic transition programme of the workers' government. This, comrades, is a far more important phenomenon from the international point of view than the Fourth Congress realised. Cautious though he is, Comrade Smeral placed before the Fourth Congress the following question: is the Workers' Government merely a temporary phenomenon, or it is possible that under certain conditions it may consolidate itself for a considerable period as part of bourgeois democracy? I do not think that this question was clearly answered at the time. It was the Leipsic and the Prague Congresses which gave it its true answer.

Nobody has anything to say against Zinoviev's formula of the workers' and peasants' government as a pseudonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Nobody will refuse to let it stand as the aim of our agitation. But only on condition that we hold



firmly to it, and leave no possibility of back doors into coalition government, or of any slackening in the tasks of the Party.

It has often been said that the German Left was against the united front tactics in themselves, but what we were always asking was, what is the united front and what ought it to be! We have already seen so many stages in the united front that we can now distinguish three of them.

The first stage was an attempt to rally the masses and form a proletarian organisation to fight for the demands of the day, In this stage negotiations between leaders make their appearance. We do not reject negotiations with leaders on principle, but the paradox lay in the fact, that as Communists, our object in entering into negotiations with leaders is to separate the masses from these very leaders, and not to form treaties with them. The Right, however, actually reproached us with entering into negotiations solely in order to break them off! In the second stage, of which the Rathenau affair was typical, temporary unions were entered upon with the social democracy.

The third stage was Saxony. Here the crime of opportunism which had existed for years makes its real appearance. This revision of the Communist theory of the state, reaches its most extreme form in the famous thesis on the victory of fascism over the November republic. This thesis is an attempt to represent fascism and the November Republic as two opposing forces, and not as different forms of the same capitalistic dictatorship. It is an attempt to build up our tactics upon the tactics of the enemy, instead of making use of the differences in the enemy's camp. Here, the Russian Party opposed Radek, and disavowed him as an opportunist.

In order to close this chapter I repeat: For the German Party it is not a matter of abandoning the united front. We do not reject the calling together of the masses for the struggle, the

establishment of the united front in the factories, and every manoeuvre which leads to the mobilisation of the masses. What we want is resolutions that exclude this Radekism, these digressions and wanderings on the question of the Workers' Government, and the united front, which lead in the direction of coalition and alliances.

I pass now to the question of events in Germany, and principally the question as to what circumstances led to the Party veering round. It was not by chance that the old Central Committees of Saxony and Thuringia wished to start the movement, for there the possibility existed of a coalition with the Left Social-Democrats. The result of this concentration of the movement in Saxony and Thuringia was a complete cleavage in the German Party. Our party was in a stage in which its leaders were completely cut off from Berlin, Cologne and Wasserkante. Only the intervention of the Communist International prevented our best leaders from leaving the Party. When we compare the position of our party to-day with that before October last, we realise what a great distance we have come.

As to the events preceding October. When Comrade Radek declared to-day that the mistake in Saxony consisted in that we could not find support in the working masses, that is a perversion of the truth. The decisive question for the workers' government was that we must call a Congress of factory councils. Five times the Left-wing of the party centre demanded that the congress of factory councils in Saxony should be called. Comrade Brandler, however, had resolved to call the factory councils' congress in all districts, not only in Saxony and Thuringia, because thereby the alliance with the Social-Democrats might be disturbed. Comrades Brandler and Radek covered up the shootings in Bautzen by declaring that fascist agents were present among the unemployed. The mobilisation of the masses was sacrificed to the desire not to

break the connection with the Social-Democrats. During the time of the greatest difficulties of the bourgeoisie, our whole policy was based upon the idea: do not let yourself be provoked; and the theory was: It is far more difficult to hold the workers back from the Right than to lead them into it. We had power then as never before.

During the strike in May, it was of part of Radek's policy to hinder every tendency of the movement to come to a crisis. On Brandler's orders we had to call upon the masses to return to work. On anti-Fascist day, we wished to organise a huge demonstration. But it was forbidden by Radek.

After the Cuno strike, which was the beginning of the awakening of the German working class, the working class for the first time put the question as a question of power and replied to our economic demands, that they wanted to overthrow the government. Thereupon Brandler told us that the next period would be one of a Left Social-Democratic-trade union government and that we could not plan upon a fight for power.

Comrades, I declare in the name of the whole German delegation that the more remote October becomes, the more profoundly do we become convinced that in October the party could have fought and should have fought (Applause). And if it would not fight, it was because it was afflicted with an opportunist Radekist malady which had undermined it.

There were two culminating points in October which we must deal with in order to show where the Radek policy had led us. The Chemnitz and Hamburg Conferences met on the same day. At Chemnitz, under the leadership of Brandler and under the influence of Radek, it was decided to retire from the fight. The workers submitted to this decision with clenched teeth for the Hamburg workers had attacked the bourgeoisie with their naked hands. This most strikingly reveals the deep cleft between our membership and our party leadership. In

October all that comrades suddenly realised that if we did not put an end to this policy, we should lose the party. Radek at that time wanted to postpone examination. The party was saved only because the Executive dropped the Right leadership.

Nobody installed the present leadership, nobody displaced the old leadership. The party simply drew conclusions from the situation. The fact that we so quickly overcame the crisis shows how great the strength of our party is. A few months have elapsed and we have already forgotten the frightful winter time; the wound is already so far healed that there is no hatred between Berlin and Halle. Unity reigns within the Party.

I will now deal with the so-called ultra-left digressions and tendencies to which Zinoviev and Radek referred. The present leadership immediately took up the fight against these tendencies with every possible energy. At the Frankfurt Party Congress and in the instructions to the Congress delegates, a clear and definite attitude was taken up towards them. The more united we are, the more rapidly shall we be done with such manifestations. The greatest danger does not lie in the "ultra-Left digressions," but in the fact that the Right danger in the party, although it has not crystallised ideologically, has still not been overcome. The danger is that if revolutionary possibilities do not permit a direct fight for power, a mass party in Europe may easily obtain votes of people anxious for "positive" reformist work within the framework of capitalism.

I will explain to Comrade Radek what we mean by saying that we are ready to lead a fight for power every day. The proof of that is the policy we pursued in Halle and Fuerstenwalde. We came in for plenty of blows, but nobody can guarantee himself against blows, and even after we have seized power, we shall no doubt often get knocked about. We shall never learn how to fight fascism out of books, but only from experience. I am coming now to the Metal-workers' Congress. Radek's version is—that Dissmann proposed at this congress to

adopt a joint list with the Communists, but, that the wicked Communists would have nothing to do with his proposal. The fact is that at the Congress, Dissmann was on the point of veering round towards the Ebert camp. He even went so far as to advocate the expulsion of the Berlin delegates.

It should be stated that this Congress took place at a time when our Party was driven underground. This was the first opportunity for the Communist Party to make itself heard, and we had to make use of it. Even if Dissmann had fallen all our neck, we should have had to take up a very Communist attitude at this Congress. Radek had much to say about the unsatisfactory results of the factory councils' elections. The results were unsatisfactory in Königsberg where Brandler's followers identified themselves with the Social-Democrats. How is it that he did not mention the successes in Berlin, Upper Silesia, Cologne, etc! Our influence among the masses is as great as before. Attempts are made to legitimise our successes. Why was no mention made of Oppeln where we polled 90 per cent. of the total vote? Comrade Radek forgot also to mention that in some centres where our comrades were expelled from the union, we had to form new fractions.

With regard to the trade union question, we have now overcome the greatest difficulties, and at the Frankfurt Party Congress the party took a strong line against the tendency to leave the unions. If we were really to enter into a period of democratic pacifism, nothing would be more dangerous than the breaking up of the trade union movement. The situation in the trade unions is such that the question of a split becomes more acute when the revolutionary situation reaches a crisis, while, when the revolutionary situation declines, the idea of unity is stronger.

We have stated in our theses that the English question is a central point for the Comintern. We cannot, however, ignore the fact that Germany, also, in consequence of the attempt to

carry out the Experts Report, is confronted with a period of most severe struggle. We are entering upon a period of concealed inflation. The currency is stable, it is true, but the capitalists are carrying on an enormous number of lockouts. The Fourth Congress did not foresee the October events. The Fifth Congress must not be deceived by Herriot and MacDonald into thinking, that a similar situation will be impossible before the Sixth Congress. We desire the Fifth Congress to give clear instructions for each country regarding the questions of the United Front and the Workers' Government.

I should like to say a few words about our British Party. In my opinion, the inexperience of our Party is responsible for the weakness of its attitude towards the reformists. The impression I got of the British comrades is as follows. Every member has two membership cards, one of the Communist Party and one of the Labour Party. It seems to me that the member belongs to the Labour Party on week days, and on Sundays by way of rest and recreation, plays a little with the Communists. If our Party does not give up its slackness in the fight against the Labour Government, it will get into serious difficulties. It seems that the criticism of MacDonald amounts to this: "Dear MacDonald, can't you be a little more radical?" The last strike wave has shown that it is possible to organise the Left-wing of the Labour Party. The Congress will also have to go into the question of parliamentary work in Great Britain. In his election programme, Ferguson stated that he was opposed to the Experts' Report, but not by a single line did he show that he was in opposition to MacDonald on this subject.

We come to the Italian Party. At the Fourth Congress we were in favour of fusion and in our opinion the Communist International must do everything possible to facilitate unity and collaboration in the Italian Party. In any case it cannot be denied that the former leaders of the German Party always

looked down rather contemptuously on the Italian comrades, although the Italian Left contains some of the best elements in the International.

We want the Fifth Congress to work out concretely the practical tasks of the individual sections and to take up a clear line against Radekism on an international scale. Let the resolutions against these opportunist digressions be as united as they were at the 13th Congress of the Russian Communist Party. The highest aim of every Communist worker in Germany must be to make the German Party an united iron Bolshevik Party, and to make the World Congress not a conglomeration of various opinions but a great step towards an united Bolshevik Party.

Comrade Wenzel (Czecho-Slovakia) made a declaration on his own behalf and that of Comrades Vercik, Fried, Colen and Foilmeirova.

He said: "We; the members of the Czech Communist Party delegation, do not agree with the declaration made by the majority of the delegation, as it is not a clear answer, or rather no answer at all, to Comrade Zinoviev's assertion, in the political report of the Executive Committee, that the Czech Communist Party, like other sections of the Communist International, has opportunist tendencies within it.

"The declaration made by the delegation is not conducive to harmonious collaboration between the Communist International and the Czech Communist Party. And why? The declaration says that the exhortations and suggestions made by Comrade Zinoviev in the report will be earnestly considered, it does not say, however, whether the majority delegation identifies itself with, or rejects the opportunistic views expressed with regard to the Party leadership by Comrade Hula, in the article quoted by Comrade Zinoviev, and in the articles of other comrades. We think that unless the opportunist tendencies mentioned are rejected, harmonious collaboration

between the Czech Communist Party and the Communist International, in accordance with all the decisions of the latter, will be impaired. The majority of the delegation of our Party should either express itself against all opportunist tendencies, or *vice versa*, in order to give the Fifth Congress the opportunity, if the latter were the case, to come to an understanding with the Czech delegation on all contentious questions.

“The declaration of the majority of our delegation, which as I said before, is not an answer to Comrade Zinoviev’s assertion about opportunist tendencies in the Party, has much to say about the practical work done by the Party. But no one, including Comrade Zinoviev, contends that the Party had no definite successes in its work during the recent period. Comrade Zinoviev merely pointed out that on some fields of our activities, especially in connection with the preparation of the proletarian revolution, as, for instance, in connection with the peasant question, not enough has been done. We must, however, point out that in speaking of our practical work, especially in Slovakia and Carpathian-Russia, Comrade Zinoviev was guilty of some inaccuracies....”

Boschkovitch (Yugo-Slavia) states in the name of the Balkan delegation (Bulgaria, Yugo-Slavia, Rumania, Greece, and Turkey) that they agree with the analysis given by Comrade Zinoviev in his speech yesterday, but at the same time “the congress must discuss the Balkan question a little more in detail, as it is of great importance and difficulty to us. The world-wide conflagration began in the Balkans. The present situation is no better than it was in 1914. The Balkans are on the International highway; they act as a bridge over which the imperialists penetrate to Asia Minor and Africa. The interests of England, France, and Italy cross each other here. Besides, rivalry exists between the Balkan States themselves.

“The Rumanian government is provoking a war; it is



bringing pressure to bear on Yugoslavia to form military alliance against the United Socialist Soviet Republic. The French and English imperialists created the Balkan states as their vassals, and as a result, national oppression, reaction, and white terror rule supreme.

The national and agrarian problems are the most pressing questions at the present time, and the Balkan Communist Parties are combining these two questions with the problem of the workers' and peasants' government and the work of preparing the ground for realising the Balkan Federation of Workers' and Peasants' Republics.

"Our delegation hopes that the Congress will pay still more attention to the Balkans. It is convinced that the Communist International will lead us to new victories under the banner of Leninism.

## **Eighth Session, June 23rd**

**Chairman: COMRADE KOLAROV,**

**Speakers: BRANDLER, THALHEIMER.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Situation— (Contd.)**

Comrade Brandler: The October events were judged and we were condemned, without any of us having even made a report. The accusations made against us are: firstly, that we betrayed the revolution, that we could have fought, but backed out like cowards: secondly, that on account of Social-Democratic petty-bourgeois deviations from true Communist policy, we so mismanaged the whole affair that we were obliged to retreat in the October fight: we are accused of revisionism; thirdly we should have fought even though the prospect was one of defeat, since our whole policy from the time of the Third and Fourth Congresses was false and we could make amends only by lighting.

In my opinion, we suffered defeat because we set ourselves a wrong task—to attack instead of defending ourselves, at a time when the enemy had the initiative because we used wrong methods and because we had falsely estimated the relation of forces. We alone are not responsible for the errors. We are all responsible—the Left, the Centre, the Right, and the representatives of the other parties who took part in the decisive discussions. We worked out the plan in common and were led into the defeat because we tried to adhere to the plan too long.

Our policy began after the Rathenau crisis, when we set

ourselves three tasks: (1) the party had recovered since the March action, but was not yet capable of fighting, and we, therefore, had to make it capable of fighting (a) by preparation for illegality, (b) by creating the organisational and ideological conditions for the civil war. That was in August, 1922. (2) As regards reorganisation, our proposal to transform the party from a Social-Democratic electoral organisation into a real party, rooted in the factories, at that time met with very little response. (3) To the organisational preparation for the civil war, belong the organisation of the sympathisers in factory councils, the control commissions, and the proletarian hundreds. Our whole party duty was to carry through this work. For 'this, Zinoviev rebuked us with being revolutionary theoreticians. I simply cannot understand this reproach. We are of the opinion that the party could enter the struggle with any hopes of success only if it were organised and were equal to the fight. If we lead the working class into the fight without making the maximum of preparations, if we light-mindedly get them to strike, the masses will not hold the bourgeoisie responsible, but us. We have done more practical work in organising the revolution than those comrades who merely talk of organising the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

And now let me come to an important political fact. When Cuno entered the government, we greeted him with a mass organisation of the workers such as has never been equalled. In reply to this government declaration, the Factory Council Congress drew up its programme for saving the German proletariat. We exerted the maximum of energy in order to carry through this programme. In many parts of Germany we succeeded in organising the periphery and in creating non-party class-war organs. In the Ruhr, the Rhineland, Westphalia, Upper Silesia, and in Central Germany our organisational work was very successful. In the Left centres, Berlin, Hamburg, and

Frankfurt-on-Main, where the power of the state had not been so much enfeebled, we suffered a fiasco.

When the Ruhr was occupied, we issued the slogan: Fight both Poincare and Cuno. We carried on this propaganda with the greatest energy. It met with great response, but we were not able at first to undertake action. On this occasion we had the lead of the Ruhr workers for the first time. We however, did not dare risk smashing up the German workers in a fight against the German and French bayonets. It became quite clear that both bourgeoisies were seeking to come to an understanding in order to prepare a blood bath for the workers. The German bourgeoisie wanted to throw responsibility of capitulation on to the shoulders of the working class. We did not regard retreat in this fight as opportunist, but as our Communist duty. The rallying of the sympathisers reached its culminating point on anti-fascist day. We issued the slogan in order to see what we could do ourselves without the aid of the Social-Democrats, and there is not the slightest doubt that we can record a success. Naturally at the first trial mobilisation we did not want to fight, since the organisational conditions for it were still lacking. When the prohibition came, we issued the word to hold the demonstrations in the Ruhr, Upper Silesia and Central Germany, but to protect them with weapons, but in the other districts to retreat and to hold the demonstrations indoors.

Now as to the October defeat. We believe that, just as after the murder of Rathenau and Erzberger, elementary preparations for a fight could be made among the masses, which could be developed by our class war organisations and transformed from defence into attack. We then spent four weeks in Moscow in order to discuss the political situation, and it was just in these four weeks that the comrades who now accuse us so bitterly, had the leadership in their hands. It was at this time that the decisive errors were committed. On my return to Germany nothing remained but to order a retreat on political grounds, for

preparations had been insufficient and the elementary will to fight was lacking. The entry into the Saxony Government was made in spite of my objections and the opposition of the Saxony comrades. I regard it to-day as one of my greatest errors that I allowed myself to be dissuaded and withdrew my objections. It was to be our duty in the Saxony Government to win time. That was the decisive error. The initiative was in the streets at the time of the Cuno strike. It was our mistake that, in spite of our weakness in Berlin, we dared not undertake the attack against the Coalition Government. The second opportunity was offered for seizing the initiative at the time when martial law was declared. The workers of Saxony and Upper Silesia did not take this seriously. They felt so strong that they believed that the government was unable to do anything. At the third opportunity, when the law for extraordinary powers was passed, preparations for the fight were completely lacking. The factory councils of Berlin, Dresden and Hamburg welcomed the proclamation of extraordinary powers, believing that they were directed against petty-bourgeois fascism.

Finally, as to the so-called parliamentary comedy in Saxony. We entered the Saxony Government in order to protect our base, (1) by arming the proletariat, and (2) by securing supplies. At the Chemnitz Conference it was obvious that the workers still believed that the march of troops into Saxony was directed against Bavaria. At the Conference I declared: "Behind this fact lies the greatest betrayal that the Social-Democrats had ever been guilty of." If we had risked the fight, we Communists would have gone forward alone to a bloody defeat, a more terrible White Terror than the Hungarian proletariat had to suffer after the overthrow of the Soviet Republic. Wide sections of the petty-bourgeois population were ready to smash the working class of Central Germany decisively. They were prepared to reach an understanding with

the French at any price In order to crush the working class. We cannot deny that our control commissions were responsible for the fact that these sections passed over to the enemy's camp. Our control organs took up the fight against the petty bourgeoisie much more severely than against the big capitalists. What was our mistake, historically speaking! Trotsky and Radek were of the opinion that if we had realised in good time that an agreement between the French and the German bourgeoisie would lead to a three months' acute crisis, we could have attacked; if we had been able to carry through all our measures, i.e., if we had been a Bolshevik Party, In other words we could have made an uprising, even though we were unable to arouse the elementary will to fight in the masses or to organise defence. Within two months we would not only have been in a position to organise the defensive, but would even have been able to proceed to the offensive.

We are not defeated because we had to retreat. It was only due to the spirit of panic that was created by the fight for power within the Party that we were brought to defeat. This is clearly shown by the fact that up to December we could show a flow of members into the party. With the struggle for the party leadership began the spirit of panic. The result is seen in all the elections we have since had.. Everywhere we have to record a decrease in votes and the results will still be seen when we are no longer made responsible for policy. The present policy will make it very difficult to win new sympathisers. The fighting strength of the working class is still unbroken, but the fighting capacity of the Communist Party has been damaged by the panic.

We shall not be able to make the German Communist Party a real revolutionary party capable of fulfilling its duties until we clearly admit the errors which really led to the October defeat.

**Comrade Thalheimer (Germany):** The Executive Committee has not, as yet, taken full advantage of the lessons of the German events. Of great importance for the future is the question of organisational interference by the Communist International in the leadership of the various sections. None of us will deny that such interference is necessary under certain circumstances. But neither in October, nor prior to October, nor in January, was this interference such as to contribute fruitfully to the development of the Parties. On the contrary, everywhere was this interference fatal and detrimental to the Parties. I want to refer to Lenin's dictum on continuity of leadership: "Continuity of leadership must not be interfered with without a good reason."

The old guard in the Russian Party is held in great respect, and rightly so. But the International fails to see that it too has definite Communist traditions, embodied in its various leading sections. And when it is said that these sections represent Social-Democratic traditions, we are compelled to declare that these are not only leading, but middle sections in the Party, who have built the bridge between the Second and the Third Internationals. And there is a great difference between having accomplished this themselves and having received it ready made.

The leadership of the Russian Party in the International is an historic necessity. The other parties will become its equals only when they have established proletarian dictatorship in their respective countries. But there must be a transitional period.

The main fight of the International must be the fight against reformism, against the democratic-pacifist wave which is again very strong to-day. But this wave, too, cannot be overcome merely by agitation, especially to-day, when this wave is also spreading in Germany. The Amsterdammers have certainly gained ground since the spring of 1924. The question

is if the parties are adopting right methods for counteracting this wave. I do not think they are. I do not think are.

There are, of course, "right" perils in the Party. But it is not true that there is a right group. I do not see the left perils first and foremost in Brois, in Korsch and in the extreme left, but in that which both have in common, namely, in their inability to overcome reformism. The fear of a spectre prevails in the International, in the form of a right group in connection with the Russian opposition. This is a spectre which does not exist. We dissociated ourselves definitely from the viewpoint of the Russian opposition, on the Russian as well as on the German question. But I must protest against the talk of Radekism. Radek has served the Germany Party well in its most critical period. The Party, as well as the International will, have much to learn yet from Radek.

I do not think that the present lines of the Germany Party and of the Communist International are correct, and I am afraid that it will lead the Party on to sandbanks. I do not think that the organisational interference in the leading Party organs was right. I see dangers ahead, and I say, beware of these dangers. Nevertheless, I declare that, as disciplined fighters, we will submit implicitly to the decisions of the Communist International, and that we shall do our work faithfully, wherever the Comintern will send us.





## **Ninth Session, June 23rd (evening)**

**Chairman: KOLAROV.**

**Speakers: SCHUELLER, RIENZI, THALMAN,  
KUUSINEN, BUKHARIN.**

### **Discussion of E.C. Report and World Situation.**

Comrade Schueller (Young Communist International): Comrades, we know that the Social-Democrats will remain united with the bourgeoisie to the end. It is clear from some parts of Radek's speech that he looks upon the Social-Democratic Party as a workers' party, with whom coalition for a revolutionary workers' government is possible. Such conceptions might lead us to revisionism of Communism. We must take up here a definite attitude towards this revisionism, if it is not to degenerate into a devastating disease.

The sharp criticism to which the leaders of the German Communist Party have submitted the mistakes made by the Party, shows that the Party is on the right way. We welcome Comrade Zinoviev's severe criticism of the Czech Party, and also the definite and clear statement made here by the Czech minority and the Czech Youth. We are also very glad that Comrade Zinoviev has broached the Polish question. What was said here about the British question, is also very significant. Comrade Roy's statement must be specially commended. We must see to it that all relics of the spirit of the aristocracy of labour be eradicated in our Party. To-day, no one will doubt that the tactics adopted by the Communist International towards the Norwegian Workers' Party were correct. I am sure everyone sees that the leadership of the Labour Party consisted

of avowed reformists, syndicalists, or at best of centrists, and that it is going further and further on this downward path. In Sweden, Comrade Hoeglund confronted the minority, which has adopted the platform of the Communist International, with an ultimatum. Not receiving a satisfactory reply, he convened a Party Congress for a date when the decisions of the world Congress will not yet be known. The Congress must at least demand the postponement of this Party Congress. The Congress must show that the entire International is solid in its support of the Russian Communist Party.

We shall have great difficulties to contend with, but we can meet these difficulties courageously, and we are bound to overcome them if the Congress will give us clear and definite directions, and will work for the Bolshevisation of all our Parties. We have every reason to believe that we are not appealing to the Congress in vain. (Applause.)

**Rienzi (Italy):** The formula of the workers' and peasants' government as a synonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat is true in the general sense of a tactical formula which places before the masses the problem of power and leads them towards an armed conflict as means of conquering it. It is also useful because in the present situation it expresses a necessary reaction against reformist interpretations of the phrase workers' and peasants' government.

We think that the political judgment pronounced by the workers' and Communists of Germany in shifting the party centre definitely to the left was a just one, though there may be some cases of personal "injustices."

On the Russian question, it was the duty of all the Communist parties to declare their attitude, and the majority of the French Central Committee was quite right to reject a position of neutrality.

As to our relations with the Socialist Party of Italy, we are

in favour of an immediate fusion with the Third Internationalists in order to continue the tactics of the united front with the Italian Socialist Party and to win over the workers who follow it.

Speaking for the Left-wing of the Italian Party, we shall do our best to help the efforts of the Communist International to eliminate the differences which exist between the theses adopted by the Rome Congress and the theses of the Communist International so that the whole Italian Party may stand firmly upon the basis of the International.

Rossi has said that Lenin's "Infantile Sickness" does not apply to the Italian Left. The very opposite is true. Lenin described this sickness in abstract, and his remarks can also be applied to Italy.

The Italian situation as it is to-day, reveals a perspective of serious political action, and it is important that there should be complete and unequivocal unity of direction, in order to assure the homogeneity and efficacy of this direction.

**Comrade Thalmann:** The attack made by Brandler and Radek against our present leaders, who represent from 90 to 95 per cent. of the German Party, is equally an attack against the Russian Party and the Executive. And it will be interesting to see what attitude the Polish, Czech, and the Swedish delegations take up on the views of Comrades Brandler and Radek.

In 1923, when the first signs of revolutionary intensity showed themselves in the Ruhr and upper Silesia, the districts of the Left demanded that the party prepare for revolution. But Brandler, who says here that he took all possible measures to prepare the party for civil war, said at the District Conference at Wasserkante: "If you don't stop this chatter about the dictatorship, you will be expelled from the Party..."

The Cuno movement showed that the masses relied far

more on their own initiative and activity than the Central Committee had believed. In Hamburg, despite the strength of the Social-Democrats, we carried through a general strike, whereas in Saxony, upon which the Central Committee was concentrating its entire policy, the general strike was rejected. That alone shows ideological differences existing within the Party, and these differences had their practical influence upon the struggle.

At the end of October, we realised that the German Communist Party was not a true Communist Party, even though 95 per cent. of it was made up of factory workers. Their leaders had not the necessary political and ideological attitude.

What took place in Dresden indicated the inner weakness of the whole Party leadership. The parliamentary comedy was revealed in Zeigner's speech on entering office when he said that the objects of the Communists in entering the government was to avoid civil war. The workers also did not understand the agreement for the indemnification of the king of Saxony. Still less did the workers understand, when Comrade Böttcher declared that he was responsible not to General Muller, but to the majority of parliament. He had not understood that it was the task to use parliament, and to declare it to be the platform for revolutionary propaganda. A conflict should have been allowed to develop, so that the proletariat should understand that it had to overcome the bourgeoisie of Saxony and of all Germany. Nothing of the sort happened. The Saxon policy was a result of those tactics of the German Communist Party which had been developed during 1920-23.

Now as to the situation in October. As we told Comrade Brandler, when information was received from the railway workers that Reichswehr forces were being drawn from the garrisons, to be moved into Saxony, it was the duty of the whole Party to issue a call to the railway workers, demanding that they should not allow the transport of any Reichswehr

troops. That also did not happen. The Central Committee of Saxony did not understand what was going on there. The bourgeoisie was more cunning. It represented the intervention of the Reichswehr in Saxony as the struggle against Bavarian Fascism, and in league with the Social-Democrats, deceived the proletariat. When Comrade Brandler says here that the Saxon proletariat believed that the forces in Saxony were only marching against Bavaria, that shows his incapacity to judge political problems, an incapacity which is responsible for the defeat of the German proletariat. The entry of the Reichswehr should have been the signal to take up the struggle along the whole line.

Brandler further says that the mood of panic, which set in after the retreat, annihilated the fighting force of the Party. It is clear that a mood of panic must set in when after the party was for months occupied in the revolution, the order was given in the Wesserkante district to take action, and then was revoked. In spite of this, after this crisis, we got 3,700,000 votes for our party. And that is a sign that we have over come the dirty work of last October, and have again drawn the proletariat together.

The membership is winning confidence, in us, including such districts which, at the Party Conference, voted against our tactics—for instance, in Chemnitz. The party is consolidated. We stand before great tasks. If the Experts' Report is carried out, that means the throttling of the German working class. It is very possible that the bourgeoisie may get a respite in which it will attempt to introduce the 11 to 14 hours working day. But, as in Italy, the position of Mussolini was made more difficult by the assassination of a Social-Democrat, so in Germany, economic and political differences may arise which will present new and great tasks to us.

We were never so determined as at this Congress. Comrades are here from the factories—proletarians, developing elements, who are able to measure themselves in

theory against the intellectuals. We hope that the Congress will show the German Party the way to achieve that which the Russian workers and peasants achieved in the year 1917: the victory of the revolution, the brotherhood in arms of the German workers and peasants, in order to erect a firm, steel-armoured wall against the world bourgeoisie. The task which we have set before ourselves is the victory of the German revolution and of the world revolution.

The discussion on the report of the Executive was continued by Comrade Bukharin, who was greeted with loud applause.

**Comrade Bukharin:** It has been asked whether there is a German question or not. To this question one can answer both yes and no. There is a German question in the same sense as there are questions for every section of the International, questions relating to party organisation and various other problems, and which the international has to solve. But in another sense there is no German question. The political situation at the present time is not so acute as it was in October, and the crisis within the Party, as it seems to nearly all of us, is solved. I think we have grown beyond the stage when we must always be asking whether a comrade is Right or Left. We must seek for the true political direction. In some situations a Left policy may do harm. In others it may be that a Left policy alone is truly revolutionary, while there are still other situations when necessity may impose upon us sometimes a Left and sometimes a Right direction.

And now to the point. The two most important problems with which we are faced are those of the united front and of the Workers' government, viewed in the light of the Saxony experiment. Radek has told the Fifth Congress that some comrades whom he did not name, had vacillated a great deal with regard to the question of the united front. I was one of

those comrades. We overrated the dangers of the united front in comparison with its possible uses to us. It is quite true that Comrade Lenin on a former occasion, represented the correct view, but on that occasion he made a mistake of the opposite kind. That was the time of the Levi crisis in Germany, and Lenin took up a position at that time which he later declared to have been wrong. How does the problem stand now! Is it true that any of us wish to put an end to the policy of the United Front? Such comrades, I think, only exist in the imagination of Comrade Radek. What we are fighting is only an interpretation of the tactics of the united front, which does really involve the greatest danger for our Communist Parties. Radek's most serious argument against this is to contrast the honest uniting of all the proletarian forces with the dishonest manoeuvres and intrigues represented by our party. This contrast is entirely wrong, and it is there the danger lies for those comrades who represent Radek's point of view. The contrast, as expressed by Radek, entirely omits the moment when our adversaries are unmasked. Even in the actual fight the main object is, after all, to gain an unquestioned leadership of the masses.

Now we come to the question of the workers' government. The reason why this question is so controversial is that we are setting ourselves a problem which cannot be solved. Workers' governments may be of the most various and peculiar kinds. Even a workers' government, which is really a dictatorship of the workers, can take many different forms. Take for instance the Russian dictatorship and the Hungarian dictatorship. There is no question that, in Hungary, a workers' government did exist, and that it did represent a dictatorship; there is also no question that, at the time we joined with the Left Social-Revolutionaries in the government, we also exercised a dictatorship of the proletariat. But while in Hungary, our party became absorbed into the Social-Democratic party, in Russia we were able to go further. We consolidated our party,

developed our mass organisations at a terrific rate, and undermined the strength of our “brothers in arms.” At the right moment we expelled the other people from the government, and consolidated the dictatorship. The whole mistake of the comrades who have spoken here lies in the fact that, instead of pursuing “Russian Policy” in the definite sense of the word, they not only undertook nothing, but sometimes pursued the very opposite policy. That was to be observed at the time of the Saxon experiment. The essential thing in a workers’ government is that one must always be driving on ahead and developing things further—that is more important than definitions.

I think it is pertinent to take as the text of our considerations the conclusions which have been recognised even by Radek. Radek said: we made two mistakes and must learn two lessons from them. First that we did not organise the united front from below and secondly that every workers’ government is bound to collapse if there are no mass organisations of the proletariat to support it. These conclusions are absolutely true, but they stand in the most violent contradiction to Radek’s further declarations. What were the tactical theories which Brandler tried to develop here! He said, we wanted to gain time for our preparations. But if anything at all is being done in this preliminary period it can surely be only one thing—action is the best preparation. Brandler says, we had to make our preparations, and so we could not manage to do certain things like extending our mass organisations, etc., etc. There we have the whole mistake before our eyes. Surely the most important elements of all cannot be eliminated from the preparations? Why then were these particular preparations never made? The mistakes admitted by Radek cannot be made to harmonise with the direction which the Central Committee was at that time pursuing.

One can never forget the sort of speeches that were being



made at this time about the "Constitution," or how compensation for the Saxon royal family was placed as an item on the agenda. Radek says: That was simply due to the parliamentary situation at the moment. I have already replied that if that is the sort of opinion you hold, if you believe that the parliamentary situation excuses anything then you can have nothing to say against the voting of the war credits by the Social-Democrats in 1914. These are symptoms which show the whole attitude of the party. Radek has explained that the telegram "ignore Muller" really meant "consider yourself the government." We were faced with an analogous situation in Kronstadt. On that occasion our Council of War also passed the word around: "Ignore General Palkornikoff of the White Guards." This message gave the signal for a storm. But none of us was quite so feeble-minded as to understand this to mean that we were a lawful and constitutional government or perhaps, that we could even be regarded as carrying on the government of the Romanoffs.

The Central Committee of the German Party pursued a policy in October which would make the carrying on of the revolution impossible. We cannot blame the comrades because they did not establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. But we can blame them for not having done everything possible to make the necessary preparations for it. Brandler said: we have to gain time in order to make our preparations; that is why we could not make any experiments in socialisation. But experiments of that kind are the preparation of the masses, they set the masses in motion.

And now a few remarks about the general position of the Communist International. The crisis which arose in the Comintern last year was no chance phenomenon. There are relations between the Russian crisis and the German, Bulgarian and French crisis, etc., etc. Conditions which produced these crises were of a two-fold nature. We have solved problems

which we all had in common. Our contact with the petty bourgeois elements had had as a result that certain petty bourgeois tendencies had become noticeable in our party. In the second place the defeats in Bulgaria, Germany, etc., have not been without their effect. There is no doubt that we shall overcome these critical conditions. It is just by fighting against deviations of this kind that truly Bolshevik parties may grow up. From one point of view, therefore, one can regard the crisis as the result of our defeats, from another, one can look upon it as a crisis natural to the process of our growth.

I do not think it is at all a bad thing that great revolutionary processes are just now developing in society. These revolutionary processes also have their own natural causes. Also, it is a very good thing that the German proletariat is changing its temperament a little. That seems to us quite a wholesome process. Marx pointed out long ago, that during a civil war, the temperament of the proletariat alters, and this change in the German proletariat is one of the preliminaries to victory in the future. (Loud applause.)

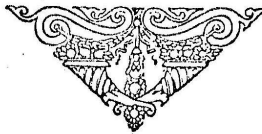
Comrade Kuusinen, speaking on behalf of the Finnish delegation, announced that in Finland, the day before yesterday, sentences were passed on members of the Central Committee and of the local organisations of the revolutionary Labour Party, who had declared for affiliation to the Comintern, and who had been in prison since last August. Eighty-nine leading comrades were sentenced to periods of imprisonment amounting altogether to 300 years. Even in the opinion of the foreign bourgeois lawyers who acted for the defence of the accused, the prosecution has committed the most shameless breaches of the law. Owing to its fear of the effect on the elections the government has only just dared to publish the sentences. Following on this statement, the Presidium proposed the following protest:

“The Fifth World Congress expresses the horror of the

whole Communist International at the terrible sentence passed as the result of class hatred, and of the malignant class terror practised by the Finnish bourgeoisie. At the same time Congress, over the heads of the Finnish Government, sends hearty fraternal greeting to the fighters who have been sentenced for their part in the revolutionary struggle to free the Finnish proletariat. The Communist International is determined to support the revolutionary class struggle of the workers and the poor peasants of Finland with all its power, until the proletarian revolution itself passes judgment on the class government of the Finnish White Guards.”

This protest was unanimously adopted by the Congress amid loud applause.

The session was then closed.



## **Tenth Session, June 24th**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Situation.**

**Chairman: THALMANN.**

**Speakers: BROWN, KOLAROV, NEURATH, PEPPER.**

“Comrade Brown (England) said that the relation of the British Communist Party to the Labour Party and to the Labour Government was of special importance to the International. Comrade Petrovsky’s statement that discontent with the MacDonald Government was growing among the masses, was liable to misunderstanding. It was true that during the past five months, considerable discontent had grown up among the masses within the Labour Party, but the Labour Government was not losing ground. It was gaining more and more support from the masses outside the Labour Party who were beginning to speak in terms of the Labour Government’s actions. MacDonald was making a bold and astute bid, by the popularisation of his various devices such as the relief of unemployment, the building of houses, etc., to capture the support of these masses. There were indications that MacDonald was winning, and would, by these means, get an increased vote at the next election.”

Turning to Comrade Fischer’s criticism of the British Party, Comrade Brown observed that our German comrade floated across to England for 24 hours, looked at Comrade Ferguson’s election address, and at once decided that a new policy was required for the British Party. She said that we were an inexperienced Party. That was partly true—but, when we

were younger, we had taken Comrade Severing's view, that we should completely oppose official Labour Party candidates, and Comrade Lenin spent a considerable time in curing us of this "purist" view. He did this because he realised that the proletarian masses were inside the Labour Party, and that fighting that Party at the polls would drive us out of contact with these masses.

Comrade Fischer failed to distinguish between the Labour Party and the Labour Government. Affiliated to the Labour Party were over five millions of trade unionists. The leadership of these masses was in the hands of liberal officials, who had succeeded in permeating the Party with pacifism and other bourgeois democratic doctrines, but the Party nevertheless remained a mass proletarian party. Our task was to get to these masses and to capture their leadership. If we opposed any Labour Party candidate, the door would be shut for us, and every Communist member excluded from the Labour Party. In every part of the country, in the local Labour parties and in trade councils, also, our fractions were at work; and their task was to drive together the opposition inside the Labour Party. To adopt Comrade Severing's view would mean that we could not continue this task. We should become sectarian, and that was opposed to the whole spirit of Leninism. This was neither a minority nor a majority point of view, but the united view of the British Party delegation, Executive and Party Congress.

In conclusion Comrade Brown round to Comrade Bordiga's letter, quoted by Comrade Zinoviev, regarding the leadership of the Comintern. He expressed the view of the British Delegation, that, although the Russian Party had lost its great leader, it was still from its experience and history fitted; beyond the possibility of challenge to provide the leadership of the Comintern.

**Kolarov (Bulgaria):** Comrade Radek declared that the

defeat of our party was very decisive. All I can say is that neither the June nor the September defeat, was decisive. The Bulgarian Communist Party still is in existence, and is getting ready for a new fight. Comrade Radek explained our defeat by the fact that the international conditions were not favourable for revolutionary action in a small country like Bulgaria. We declare that the international situation had nothing to do with the attitude adopted by the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party towards the *coup d'état* of June, 1923. The attitude of our Party was entirely determined by internal Party conditions and tactics. Comrade Radek also said in his speech that the main cause of our Party's defeat was the lack of attention on the part of our Party to propaganda and work among the poorer sections of the masses. This is not so. I venture to say that there is not another Party in the Communist International which has done as much work among the poorer sections of the masses as the Bulgarian Communist Party, two-thirds; of which consists, by the by of small peasants.

Our chief mistake was not the attitude of our Party towards the poor peasantry, but its attitude towards the political peasant organisation and towards the peasant government.

Our view was that it was impossible to form a coalition with the Peasant Party while it was in power. But after the June defeat conditions were different, and our Party adopted the united front from above as well as from below, and commenced a movement which is developing favourably. The slogan of the workers' and peasants' government, which before the *coup d'état* was merely an invitation to the workers and peasants to form a revolutionary alliance, was converted after the June and September events into a slogan of revolutionary action. The workers' and peasants' government can only be achieved by revolutionary action.

It is wrong to say that external conditions preclude all revolutionary action. We, the representatives of the Balkan

countries are of the opinion that the situation in the Balkans is as complicated, uncertain and revolutionary as before, and that it is pregnant with serious consequences. Therefore, we fully agree with the line adopted by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, whose aim is—to organise and to guide the revolutionary campaign in all countries.

Comrade Neurath (Czecho-Slovakia): Some comrades, including Comrade Smeral, say in effect: We are living in a period of consolidation of capitalism which is going to continue for a long time, and for this reason we must prepare the party immediately not for revolutionary struggles but for the fight for every day demands, for building up the party, while devoting greater attention to parliamentary activity. The consolidation of capitalism involves also the consolidation of the social democracy, and this signifies not only an increase of parliamentary tactics, but also the rejection of a revision of the tactics of the united front as hitherto practised. This accounts for the frantic appeal to refrain from putting a right construction upon the decision of the Executive in the German question, as though it would serve as a basis for the tactics of the other sections.

Now, comrades, instead of a period of respite we have a period of intense class struggle ahead of us. The German bourgeoisie must, and will, go on with its struggle, and the German working class will have to engage its full force in defence. The sections, particularly in the important capitalist countries, must get ready for big fights, and as is properly pointed out in the instructions of the German Party, they must be prepared any day to lead the Party and its followers among the workers into decisive revolutionary fight. The German Party is already prepared to lead the party any day into such decisive revolutionary fights. We can make no such claim on behalf of the Czech Party.

Comrade Radek wondered whether we were in earnest

about the united front. Of course we are, and it is our honest aim to get the Social-Democratic masses of the workers to fight on our aide.

As regards the workers' and peasants' government, we may say that, as soon as the situation in Czecho-Slovakia becomes critical, Massaryk, Benes, and the others will even join the fascist against the Communists. Nevertheless, the slogan is a good one. A situation may arise when the Czech party will have to consider seriously the question of a workers' and peasants' government. Nevertheless, it is expressly understood that on the formation of a workers' and peasants' government, in which the Communist Party will be represented, our representatives will promptly reveal their Communist identity, and wage relentlessly the fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Comrade Radek spoke about official and unofficial discipline. This the workers of the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party will fail to comprehend. There is but one discipline: the discipline of the revolutionary Communist Party, and the membership of the Czech Party will always stand in close ranks behind the Communist International and the Russian Communist Party.

**Comrade Pepper (U.S.A.):** In the discussions which have hitherto taken place only one side of the united front tactics and of the question of the workers' and peasants' government came to the fore: the united, front with the Social-Democrats and the workers' government in Saxony.

We have not spoken of the united front in connection with the labour parties in a number of countries.

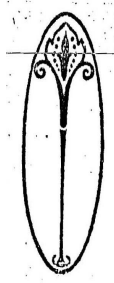
What must be our tactics with relation to the Labour Party? Lenin said, and the Comintern in 1920 adopted a decision accordingly, that we were to enter the Labour Party not to use it mechanically as a means of contact with the masses, but to



use it as a means of severing the masses, from their opportunist leaders. Unfortunately our parties have not understood these tactics correctly. There was a period when they refused to enter the Labour parties. Now, however, they want to remain in at all costs, even at the cost of our political independence and freedom of criticism. Neither of these standpoints is Communistic. We must go in, but we must maintain our political independence, Comrade Murphy is, wrong when he says that to leave the British Labour Party would be to leave the Labour movement. Every Communist can through his trade union membership remain a member of the Labour Party. But the Communist Party, as a Party, is not obliged to remain in the Labour Party. (Applause). This ill determined historically. To-day I may be in favour of the British Communist Party remaining in the Labour Party, but tomorrow we may be against it, and I believe that the time will come when the whole Comintern will be against it. We must remain inside because the Labour Party still retains the confidence of its membership, and for three reasons: firstly, because it makes the workers certain small concessions which are important in their everyday life. Secondly, because the working class masses hold the standpoint that the Labour Party is indeed, in office but not in power. Thirdly, because we have still not been capable of spreading the idea of the proletarian revolution in Great Britain. The Communist Party in England must remain within the Labour Party organisationally, but outside ideologically.

It is very easy to criticise the British and American comrades, but as Comrade Zinoviev said, the central question of the Congress is, to point out the way to the British, American, Canadian, South African, and Australian comrades. We must give advice, not merely criticise. The crystallisation of the Communist world party must be effected both intensively and extensively. Intensively in the sense that we must Bolshevise the existing Communist parties, and

extensively in the same sense that we must win new sections of the earth for Communism. (Applause.)



## **Eleventh Session, June 24th (Evening)**

**Chairman:** THALMAN.

**Speakers:** DUNNE, ZETKIN.

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Situation.**

**Comrade Dunne:** The American Party had from its very beginning met with the open hostility of the American bourgeoisie; and it had been able to operate in the open only since 1922. The American Party was not faced with the necessity, as were the European parties, of splitting the masses from Social-Democratic leadership. The American Socialist Party had been dispersed, with the exception of a handful who were now in the Gompers Camp. There was no revolutionary party except the Communist Party of America. They were confronted with no dangers in the formation of the united front with lower strata of the petty-bourgeoisie and with trade union leaders. The American Party met with no competition in its campaign for the leadership of the masses.

Its object in carrying on the manoeuvres for the formation of the Farmer-Labour Party was to drive a wedge between the exploited farmers and workers and the capitalist parties. There were some differences within the party as to the basis for the Farmer-Labour movement. Some wished to base it upon the industrial workers, but the minority tended to over-emphasise the importance of the agricultural workers. In this connection Comrade Pepper's claim to represent the Left was not correct. To wish to make the agricultural worker the basis of the movement as against the industrial proletariat was not a Left

basis.

America was faced with a coming economic crisis, with a great increase in unemployment, the closing of factories and general industrial paralysis. Comrade Varga's statement that Comrade Pepper was the only representative of the American Party who foresaw the coming crisis, is absolutely untrue. The Party had foreseen it but believed that the crisis would not come as quickly as was estimated by Comrade Pepper. They were now fully prepared to meet the coming crisis, but believed that the rapidity of its arrival was over-estimated.

The St. Paul Conference did not result in the formation of a mass party, but in the gathering together of various elements including groups of bankrupt farmers. Until the industrial masses were drawn into the party, it would possess no basis as a real mass revolutionary party. But at present the American working class was too well employed, well paid, fed and clothed to be in a revolutionary state of mind.

Turning to the problem of American imperialism, Comrade Dunno pointed out that Latin America, which contains a population of 110,000,000 Spanish-speaking peoples, had largely replaced the lost German markets as far as the United States was concerned, the population of South America was on the whole hostile to American imperialism, and it was the task of the American Party to organise these workers to resist the American imperialist class.

The American trade union bureaucrat, controlling four millions of workers; was the world's most reactionary trade union leadership. It was the first line defender of capitalism and fought for American imperialism. The principal task of the American Party was to embrace and lead the whole 20 millions of America's industrial proletariat. It was a clear-cut fight between the Communists and all sections of the bourgeoisie. The ten to twelve million negroes, the most bitterly exploited race in America, were led by people whose function it was to

keep them servile henchmen of the bourgeoisie. They were being driven into industry to compete with the white workers. They constituted a serious problem, coupled with which was the influx into the industry of two million farmers, driven off the land by bankruptcy. The agricultural group was of decreasing importance as an economic and political factor, and the American Party must not base its tactics of the united front on the farm proletariat. The American party was now becoming a mass party and was united behind its present leadership. Its experiences in the past two years had brought it knowledge and ability to deal with the complicated American economic struggle.

**Comrade Zetkin:** We have listened to the statement of the majority representatives of the German Communist Party about the October defeat, and its causes. We were entertained to a grotesque misrepresentation of the past, and to a heavenly glorification of the present. It was asserted that the October defeat was the inevitable outcome of the petty-bourgeois, opportunistic policy pursued by the Communist Party since 1921, which was calculated to liquidate the role of the Communist Party as an independent and leading revolutionary class party of the proletariat. There are several facts which give the lie to this assertion. We are told here about Brandlerism and Radekism, regardless of the fact that until quite recently Radek was one of the most ardent champions of the Left-wing. Brandler, who is reproached with having pursued his policy quite consciously and systematically since 1921, did not get back to Berlin until the autumn of 1922. Yet another fact should be pointed out: the policy of the former Central Committee was endorsed by the Executive until the October defeat. Therefore, if the German Party is indeed guilty of any sin, the Executive is equally guilty. To my mind, the October defeat was due to a number of causes, which should prompt us

to criticise severely the attitude of the Party prior to October.

Thanks to the occupation of the Ruhr, the situation was doubtlessly extremely revolutionary from an objective point of view, and it already began to grow even subjectively revolutionary. The Party did not take timely cognisance of the revolutionary situation, nor did it take advantage of the situation with sufficient consistency and vigour. It was the duty of the Party to lead up the common everyday demands of the proletariat to the demand for the conquest of power, and to challenge a civil war, not abstractly, but by utilising and intensifying the movement for the ameliorating of the misery of the people. The Party failed to utilise all the opportunities for action in parliament, in the municipal councils, at public meetings and demonstrations, so as to transform every cry for bread, clothing, or education into the cry, down with the capitalist dictatorship! The Party failed to concentrate and to permeate the factory councils and to organise them into points of support for mass action. Neither did it infuse the breath of life into the militant organs of the united front, by making the proletarian hundreds active and by giving them a definite aim, to serve as the defence corps of the workers of their daily struggles.

How are these mistakes to be explained? The Party did not consider the fight for partial demands as a means of recruiting, mobilising and educating the proletariat for the mass fight for power. This wrong view is indeed a fatal Social-Democratic legacy. When the Party at last saw the full meaning of the revolutionary situation, it made a belated effort to rally the mass organisations and to equip them militarily and technically for the armed rising. Of course, military and organisational preparation are both necessary things. But they alone do not suffice. They must go hand in hand with tireless and consistent education of the masses to the necessity and inevitability of the armed light. It was Napoleon who said that 80 per cent. of the

guarantees of victory are of a moral nature. This is twice ten-fold, true of civil war. On the outbreak of the revolutionary fight, the masses will have to take into consideration the military and technical preparedness of the counter-revolution. The deficiency must be made good by moral factors; political insight, militant courage, self-sacrifice, etc. The military and technical preparations will partly be effected in the actual course of the struggle. The most essential postulate for the start of the fight is for everyone to be convinced that the fight must be fought, and that he must take part in it. This conviction begets the desire to find one's own weapons, and it is quite possible that this desire will render every stick in the house, every hammer in the factory and even every bare fist, a mighty weapon wherewith to fight the enemy. Under these circumstances the "workers' government" of Communists and Social-Democrats was indeed a huge mistake. The only sense in a workers' government was if it would be formed as the crowning effect of a tremendous mass movement, backed by the political organs of proletarian power outside of parliament, by the workers' councils and by their congress, and above all, by an armed working class. The very reverse was done.

The same thing happened at the time of the Cuno strike. The Cuno strike was certainly an abortive attempt to lend political colour to the movement of the masses, but it revealed also the great lack of political maturity for the revolt, for the capture of power. The masses allowed themselves to be lulled by the Social-Democratic bourgeois botch-potch of the Stresemann-Solmann-Hilferding Government. Then came the Emergency Power Act, the dispatching of Reichswehr troops to Saxony, the proscription of the Communist Party, and the fascist dictatorship. Yet the masses remained dumb. No message came from the masses to indicate their revolutionary readiness and willingness to fight. But you will tell me, comrades: what about Hamburg? Well, Hamburg is a very

strong argument in support of my view. All the sincere admiration which I felt for the couple of hundred brave souls who fought like lions at Hamburg could not make me oblivious of the mortifying fact that these fights were not accompanied by any action of solidarity either from the ranks of our party or from the ranks of the proletariat of Hamburg. A few hundred were allowed to fight unaided. (**Thalmann:** "Because they had no arms). I am aware of that, Comrade Thalmann, but what became of the resolve to requisition arms by force? Under those circumstances not only the Hamburg proletariat should have been inspired by the call to arms that was, once made by Herve:

Tear the crosses out of the ground,  
Turn, the crosses into swords!

I noticed no resolve of this kind. And where was this spontaneous action of solidarity, even in one industrial district of Germany! The militant revolutionary resolve of the Party proved an illusion.

We now come to the second part of the statement, to the heavenly glorification of the present.

When listening to the story of the consolidation of the party, of its increased activity, of its growing interest over the masses, and of its ever-increasing resolve to fight, I am tempted to exclaim: "I hear the message but alas: I lack the faith." Faith cannot be gained by fine words, but by deeds., In my estimation the party is still in the throes of a severe crisis of development, and it is not yet fully capable of action. I am going to substantiate my statement by a few facts. The party emerged from the underground into the open, yet there was no forceful campaign to indicate to the masses that the Communist Party was no longer an outlawed Party, but a strong and militant party. The slogan of such a campaign should have been "set the class war prisoners free." The May Day celebration: which should have been a stronger demonstration



against reaction than ever before was a tame affair in Berlin and, in the rest of Germany, with but few exceptions. It is characteristic that the Central Committee had discussed for a long time whether a uniform May Day celebration should be organised or it should be left to every district to arrange its own celebration to suit that local circumstances. One more fact. The raid of the Berlin police on the Russian Trade Delegation should have been made the object of a forceful campaign. The masses should have been aroused to a vigorous fight against French imperialism, against world imperialism and also against the German bourgeoisie which was prepared to sell Germany to international imperialism as an article of merchandise. The national question should have been put by us and utilised from our revolutionary standpoint as a means for the conquest of power by the proletariat. This calls for a vigorous campaign in favour of the most far-reaching alliance with Soviet Russia. To this end it was necessary to take advantage of the fact that the large, small and middle bourgeoisie are equally interested in such an alliance. Yet no campaign was started, and the party contented itself with a few good demonstrations. The elections have shown a very welcome growth of the Communist Party, but it is overshadowed by the fact that six million votes were polled by the Social-Democrats and that some proletarian votes were given to the fascists. I hail with delight the demonstration made by our faction at the opening of the Reichstag, nevertheless, I regret to see the absence of contact with the masses. There were no mass demonstrations in the Reichstag.

All these facts lead me to the conclusion: the party has not yet consolidated its forces and its activity to rally the masses to action by our propaganda and education, to unchain the activity of the masses, and to get the masses into the conquest of power. No doubt the October defeat was partly to blame for this, as well as the economic situation, the exodus from the trade unions (for which, by the way, the party is partly to

blame) the wholesale victimisation of comrades, and so on. But there were doubtless some other causes too. For instance, the inadequate organisational shaping of the party and its insufficient theoretical schooling, and the faltering, vacillating policy of the Central Committee, which has manifested itself particularly in its attitude upon the trade union question. I will recall only the hesitant attitude of the party leadership towards the workers' congress, the weak action for gaining admission into the trade unions and for capturing them.

We must clearly understand that the united front must be a union for life or death of all proletarians who are rebels against the capitalist profit-system and the bourgeois state, a firm revolutionary fighting brotherhood under the leadership of the Communist Party. Two preliminary conditions are necessary for such an united front. Firstly, that the Communist Party must be a firmly consolidated, disciplined, centralised unit with unshakable principles and convictions. It must never conceal its true character. In its actions it must never allow itself to be bound by considerations of other parties. It must always act with extreme firmness and independence as the revolutionary leader of the masses. The second condition for the united front is that we must be capable of improving our contact with the masses and their unity struggles for the daily needs of the proletariat and the producers in general. I cannot accept the statement of Comrade Zinoviev to the effect that the workers' and peasants' government was only a pseudonym, a synonym, or some other "nym" for the dictatorship of the proletariat. In Russia this may perhaps have been true, but in countries with an advanced capitalist development it is not true. In these countries the workers' and peasants' government is the political expression of a definite historical situation, as Engels foresaw: in other words, a state of affairs in which the bourgeoisie can no longer maintain power, but in which the proletariat is not yet sufficiently mature and united to set up its

dictatorship. Large sections of the proletariat still believe that they can exercise their power within the old forms; they are still bound by illusions as to parliamentary and bourgeois democracy. The workers' government can come only as the expression of a revolutionary mass movement. This is also true even if a parliament is its godmother. The workers will expect that it should conduct a revolutionary Labour policy. This is impossible without dictatorial attacks of the most severe character upon capitalist economy and private property. It is, therefore, obvious that a workers' government can never maintain itself by the strength of Parliament. It must base itself on the support of the organs of power of the revolutionary workers outside parliament: the soviet congress and the arming of the proletariat.

Our attitude to the masses must be such that the party should become the planning and leading brain, the organised backbone and the passionate forward-driving heart of the masses; the life of the party must become the life of the masses. Masses and party as active subjective factors of the revolution, belong together. For this purpose the Communist parties must become steadily Bolshevised. They must become permeated with the attitude and adopt the practice of what in my opinion is the organisational and political superiority of Bolshevism. It is the principle that a revolutionary party cannot tolerate merely paying members, that every member must be an active, working, fighting member, fulfilling definite party duties. We must fill every party member, every working man, and every working woman, with the conviction that although their will and their deeds may be but a drop, nevertheless, it may be the drop which will fill the cup of the revolutionary will-to-act to overflowing. If we succeed in working and fighting in this manner, the revolutionary wave will again well up from the depths of objective forces and to it will unite itself the will of the masses under the leadership of the Communist

Party, tense for the fight, driving the wave of revolution forward with irresistible power, so that it swallows up bourgeois society. Let us exert every effort to make the wonderful, proud slogan of the young soviet pioneers a reality in our party: "Always ready." (Applause.)

## Twelfth Session, June 25th

**Chairman: COMRADE STEWART.**

**Speaker: HOEGLUND, DENGEL, FRIEMUTH,  
MACMANUS.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Situation.**

**Comrade Hoeglund (Sweden):** We see quite clearly that the united front can come only from below. The Swedish Social-Democracy has long since become what Comrade Zinoviev calls the Third Party of the bourgeoisie. For this reason we entertain no illusions as to the possibility of winning over the Social-Democratic leaders for a real class struggle. The parliamentary elections will take place in Sweden next September, and the Communists together with the Social-Democrats, will perhaps obtain a majority of the Lower House. The Communist Party will certainly oppose the idea of Communists joining the Cabinet. Exceptional circumstances may certainly arise in any country, when a voluntary alliance of the different Labour parties into workers' and peasants' government may be conducive to good results to the cause of the proletariat. It is important that this Congress should elaborate the principles for guidance in this respect.

Within the Swedish Party there are no differences of principle, either politically or tactically. But a number of gross violations of discipline on the part of comrades from the minority, upon organisational and personal questions has compelled us to convene an emergency conference, to enforce the most elementary principles of Party discipline.

The Swedish Party is heart and soul with Soviet Russia and the Communist International. We in Sweden, too, shall

endeavour to create a real good Communist Party, with an iron discipline which is the indispensable postulate to victory.

**Comrade Kuusinen:** The Finnish delegation is in full agreement with the political stand-point developed by Comrade Zinoviev in his report. I wish to point out what we consider as the most important task for the near future. At the Fourth Congress, Comrade Lenin gave us a farewell lesson by telling us to learn, particularly from the Russian experience. This lesson was amplified by Comrade Zinoviev's exhortation: develop the Communist International into a world party. The meaning of both these lessons is that we must devote our main attention to the development of our own organisation. The Third Congress had directed our attention to the problem of winning the masses outside of our Party. This continued to be our practice long after the Fourth Congress. It is only now that we feel the need for the Bolshevisation of our organisation.

The character of the German Party is quite different now from what it was a year ago. It has now assumed a militant nature. Of course, this is not yet everything, but it is a good step in the right direction.

The mistake of many comrades in the application of the tactics of the united front was that they did not conceive it, at least in practice, as being associated with fighting. The united front can only serve as a method for the mobilisation of the masses for the fight and in the fight. The whole tactics of the united must always be carried out in connection with revolutionary mass actions.

A few words about Scandinavia. The Norwegian Party sabotaged all the decisions of the Communist International, and systematically suppressed the Communist minority. Thus the split came about. We have nothing to repent of. In the latest economic fights in Norway we saw the Tranmael Party siding flagrantly with the employers, and sabotaging the class

struggle. At the time of the split, Comrade Hoeglund indulged in some bitter and “disloyal attacks upon the Executive and upon the Norwegian Communist Party. He now admits that he did the wrong thing.

Comrade Hoeglund tells us there were no opportunists in Sweden, no differences of principle. Comrade Hoeglund forgets the good Communist rule which says that the leader of a party should take the initiative in clearing up the question and not obscuring it. When we think of his utterances in defence of pacifism, or of his campaign against centralisation, we cannot help asking him for some definite statement of principle.

Comrade Hoeglund aims all his arrows in one direction only: against a minority of his own Party which wants to transform it into a fighting party, and against the youth organisation. We do not wish to lose Comrade Hoeglund: but just because we wish to retain him, and we must call him to order and say to him: No retreat from the front, but back to the front.

Comrade Dengel (Germany): Comrade Varga says that the situation is confused and that, therefore, one cannot delineate a clear perspective. He thinks it is possible that normal capitalism will be re-established. He asserts that the international inter-dependence of capitalistic interests has not yet proceeded so far that it has overcome all contradictions already. To construct such a perspective is highly dangerous for the International. This false conception of Varga's gives rise to other deviations, in pacifist formula, for instance, when he speaks of the “utterly unjustifiable occupation of the Ruhr by the French.” Varga's attitude towards the Experts' Report also comes near, at least, to a pacifist tone. He adopts the opinions of the English press as to the way the report will work out and these opinions are well-known to be inspired by the London Stock Exchange.

I think the Congress must take its stand firmly on the fact,

stated long ago by Lenin, that the world war was the beginning of a period of world revolution. Of course, it is idle to discuss whether capitalism can or cannot get out of the present crisis: our own opinion is that the contradictions of the capitalist system have not grown less but greater.

The first effect of the Experts' Report will be that the German capitalists will attempt to use it for their own salvation, and that they can only do by tremendous oppression and depletion of the German workers. But if they do succeed in this, and if the German proletariat submits to the most violent plundering, the German bourgeoisie will be faced with difficulties. The English aim, which is expressed in the Experts' Report in the most brutal manner, is to diminish the German export trade. The payment of reparations would involve exports from Germany to an extent which would ruin English capitalistic economy. Contradictions like this are so great that the whole position of capitalism is not improving, but growing worse. The occupation of the Ruhr and the reparation crisis are the continuation of the war by the use of other methods, and it must be our object to transform this war into civil war.

Comrade Freimuth made the following statement on behalf of the German delegation. "In the discussion on the report of the Executive Committee, a number of supporters of the Radek-Brandler tendency, which was rejected by the Frankfurt Party expressed their personal views on questions concerning the German Party. The German delegation listened, patiently to these explanations, but considers them superfluous and misleading. The German Party, having learned by the lesson of the October defeat, wholly dissociated itself from this tendency which at the Frankfurt Congress did not get a single vote. Thus the representatives of the tendency at this Congress represent no one but themselves.

The German Party, trusts that the Fifth Congress will, by



its decisions and their proper application, eradicate the Right-wing tendencies within the Communist International in such a way that their representatives will not be able to present themselves again at any congress of the Communist International.

Comrade MacManus (England) said that it was evident from Comrade Zinoviev's report and from the speeches of delegates, that the biggest problem before the International was the growth of opportunistic tendencies. There were indications of this tendency in Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, Russia, Poland and in Great Britain. This opportunistic wave had common international characteristics, and these were the results of definite abuses of the application of the tactics of the united front. The source of these abuses was the slow development of the social revolution. The biggest task, therefore, was not to chastise the parties for their past errors; but to ensure that there should be no repetition of those errors. One way of ensuring this was the preparation by the Congress of a careful, complete statement in detail, of the application of the united front to individual parties. One of our mistakes up to the present had been to assume that having made the generalisation of the united front, we could rely on individual parties to interpret and apply the tactics.

Comrade Zinoviev's reference to the importance of the difficulties and problems of the British situation was welcome. The fact that it had led the delegations in their speeches to make some contribution to this problem was an achievement. But hitherto the reference had not been very helpful. There was a tendency to generalise and not to touch the kernel of the problem. The British problem was not the Party's attitude to the Labour Party, nor to the Labour Government. These were secondary, the real problem how to form a British mass Party. This was the problem last June when the Executive of the International, and the British Party studied the problem. The

picture they then had was of the whole British working class movement under the control of opportunist, Second Internationalists leaders; the Labour Party in opposition with every probability of a Labour Government; the growing tide of workers' demands stemming the capitalist offensive, the consequent probability of a period of strikes with the masses making demands and waiting for leadership and old leaders not prepared to lead. It was then the task to define clearly the policy to fit this situation and to lead to the building of a mass party. It was the first task of the Communist Party to enter into the growing struggles, to try to organise the growing discontent, and to rally the discontented elements around the definite programme of the Communist Party. It was decided that the duty of the Party was to carry on a campaign in the trade unions and workshops to challenge the old leadership; that is the development of a minority movement. The second phase of this movement was to develop it in every direction which would challenge the old leadership. It was the Party's duty to rally the minority movements in the individual unions into an opposition movement towards the entire trade union leadership.

The mass party could come only in this way, namely, out of minority and opposition movements. The minority movement among the miners had been strong enough to compile a programme of demands and to thrust them on the Executive Committee. The opposition to these demands, led by the arch reactionary Frank Hodges, had ended in his ejection from the secretaryship and the substitution of A. J. Cook. At the present moment, the miners' minority movement demands were being pressed upon the Executive Committee. In addition this movement was running its own weekly paper, with a circulation of 40,000. Similar activities were being conducted in the metal trades, docks, transport, sea-faring and textile industries.

Turning to the Party's attitude towards the Labour Government, Comrade MacManus pointed out that the Labour Party comprised practically all the working class bodies in Britain. He endorsed Comrade Murphy's statement that, if the British Party remained outside the Labour Party, it would remain outside the organised working class movement.

The opposition within the British Communist Party was diminishing, and was no longer a serious problem. It was an inheritance from the old parties of whom the British Communist Party had been formed, and had manifested itself mainly in connection with the question of party candidates for parliament. The Manchester Conference had made the position of candidates quite clear; their campaigns were now viewed only from the point of view of the Party's task, as he had described it, within the Labour Party.

Comrade MacManus concluded by reading the following declaration by the British delegation to the Congress.

(1) The "right" tendencies observed in different parties, especially in the German, Russia, Polish, Czecho-Slovakian and other parties, should not be considered as local or national deviations. We are witnessing a general development of opportunist tendencies in different parties, including that of Great Britain, which we consider to be the result of the slow development of the social revolution.

(2) The reports and declarations made by different parties show that although as a rule these "right" deviations express themselves in different aspects in different countries, yet there is something common to them all. These opportunist groups abuse mostly the application of the correct principles of the United Front. For this reason we fully agree that the World Congress should not only explain the proper method to be adopted in the application of the united front, but it should also give a concrete plan of action for each Party. The Congress should emphasise quite definitely and particularly that the

united front should be considered as a slogan to mobilise the Labour masses for revolutionary action under the leadership of the Communist Party.

(3) As far as Great Britain is concerned we suggest that a closer stand should be taken against the leadership of the Labour Party as well as the Labour Government which has already become purely and simply a capitalist and imperialist government.

(4) Considering the Labour Party as an amalgamation of different unions and Labour organisations the Communist Party should fight on this field in order to get the leadership of the Labour Movement in Great Britain. For this purpose the British Communist Party should continue to struggle for affiliation to the Labour Party. Under no circumstances, however, should the Communist Party in striving to secure affiliation, sacrifice its right of independent action and the fullest right of criticism.

(5) The question of nominating Parliamentary candidates against the candidates of the Labour Party is a question of tactics and not of principle. It is the task of the Communist Party to see that the selection of candidates is made only after a strong and clear fight not in closed rooms before committees, but before the bulk of the masses. In this struggle the nominees of the Independent Labour Party, and Labour Party leadership should be opposed by nominees of the Communist Party and by the Party platform. When the Labour Party candidate, however, has been selected against the will of the Communist Party, we should not at this moment, under the present circumstances, when the Communist Party is still weak, oppose with an independent candidate of our own, having in mind that according to the rules of the Labour Party, groups who oppose Labour candidates are liable to be expelled from the Labour movement. At this moment any such action on our part would simply held the old leadership to get rid of the Communist

centre which is organising and mobilising the revolutionary elements of the Labour movement. But while not opposing with an independent candidate of our own, we should participate in the campaign for the single purpose of urging the constituencies to demand revolutionary action from the Labour candidates. In this way the united front becomes a battle and not a concession.

(6) Communist Candidates should be nominated and selected only on the basis of a clear and fighting Communist policy. Our candidates should in no way be selected simply as Left-wing representatives of the Labour Party. It should be made definitely clear from the commencement of the campaign what the Communist candidate fights for. It should be remembered that it is of even greater importance to win the masses over to Communism than to win a parliamentary seat, on a vague opportunist Labour platform.

We expect to submit concrete propositions on this matter to the Political Commission as well as to the British Commission. We present this statement to the Congress at this time, however, in order to avoid misunderstandings about the position of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

This statement, comrades, is a statement which has been drawn up and signed, and is now presented to the Congress as a complete and unanimous opinion of the delegation here representing the Communist Party of Great Britain.

## **Thirteenth Session, June 25th (Evening)**

**Chairman: COMRADE STEWART.**

**Speakers: PICCINI, ERCOLI, KATAYAMA,  
MONTEFIORI, KREIBICH, WOLFE,  
BORDIGA.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Situation:**

**Comrade Puccini (Italy):** Events are occurring in Italy at the present time, the extent of which cannot be estimated. It is not impossible that a complete reversal of the situation may occur. If our Party can succeed in placing itself at the head of the movement, it is possible that a decisive struggle with fascism may develop. The bourgeoisie is aware that an enormous amount of revolutionary feeling exists among the Italian masses, and it knows that, if the situation lasts, the wave of revolution will not merely sweep away the fascist dictatorship, but the whole bourgeois regime. For this reason a large section of the bourgeoisie will attempt to turn the fascist dictatorship into the path of democracy. It is also possible that fascism may choose a third way, that of a new march upon Rome, in order to consolidate its position. The Italian proletariat has again become conscious of the fact that it is the - decisive factor in the political life of Italy. The class struggle is again beginning to flare up. It is certain that, at the next opportunity, the proletariat will again take up the struggle and carry it on to a decisive fight, which will lead it to victory. Comrade Piccini here read a manifesto against the murder of Matteotti, secretary of the Reformist Party and calling for unity

in the revolutionary ranks to overthrow fascism. Ercoli (Italy) speaking on behalf of the majority of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party, that is of the Centre group, explained why this group had detached itself from the Left-wing with which it was in solidarity in the early years of the Party. He said:

To-day the conditions of the proletarian movement in Italy are profoundly different from those of two years ago. Our Party has won for itself an unshakable position among the best sections of the working class, but it must now shoulder the task of becoming a mass party. This problem cannot be solved unless we give up the theses of Rome, and unless we modify the spirit in which the Bordiga group has been leading the Party in recent years.

Rossi declared himself ready to accept the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government, if it is merely a question of words. The truth of the matter is that, in the conquest of power, we must carry out a manoeuvre. There are comrades who say that the manoeuvring should be limited now that we no longer have a leader like Lenin. Our answer is that Lenin did not map out a line of tactics to suit himself alone, but for the places and times, in which there are solid Communist parties that are closely connected with the working class. The Fifth Congress must lay down the basis on which such Parties could be formed throughout Europe.

For these reasons we are in agreement with the conduct of the Central Committee of the Russian Party in regard to the opposition.

Finally, we are against any proposal to accept the Italian Socialist Party into the International as a sympathising party, in the form and on the conditions adopted at the Enlarged Executive in June.

**Katayama (Japan):** The Japanese delegation is in

agreement with the report of Comrade Zinoviev, but regrets that he made scarcely any mention of the Eastern question. Comrade Varga's report and thesis is also incomplete, it takes account of no other countries except Europe and America, and never making even mention of the serious depreciation in the Japanese currency. He should write another report or else change his title to "Report on the European and American Economic Situation." His report is not a report on the "world situation." We consider that the slogans of the united front and of the workers' and peasants' government as defined by Zinoviev are quite correct so long as they are interpreted in a revolutionary manner. They are also suitable for the East, though they cannot be applied there as they are in the West. For in the Eastern countries the agrarian problem is by far the most important of all, the capitalist system has not yet developed there, they are countries exploited by the imperialists. It might be said that in the East the mass of workers are all peasants, but in India, China and other colonial countries, capitalism has, since the war, begun to develop. Therefore the slogans of the workers' and peasants' government can be adopted and its application to the past should be carefully studied.

As to the united front this should be a united front of all the Sections of the Comintern against Imperial oppression in the East and in the Far East, and should be led by the Comintern. Hitherto there has been no connection between those sections of the Comintern which belong to the exploiting countries of the West and those belonging to the exploited countries of the East. There is a danger of approaching those questions from the petty-bourgeois nationalistic point of view.

With regard to Comrade Bordiga's doubts as the Russian leadership of the Comintern, Comrade Katayama pointed out that in the last five years, Soviet Russia had grown into a strong country even speaking only in the economic point of



view.

I am against the leadership of the world revolution by any other Party of the Comintern than the Russian Party.

Comrade Montefiori (Australia): The tasks before the Australian Party were in many respects similar to those before the British Labour Party. Both had the task of affiliating the Communist Party to the Labour Party, both had the task of forming a united front of the workers and both were attempting to become real live parties.

The Australian trade unions were extremely conservative, and had always strongly hold to the "White Australia" theory. They believed that coloured labour would lower the standard of the Australian worker. The Communist Party had to prove to them, especially in view of capitalist development and of the vast importance of the Pacific problem at the present time, that when Marx said "workers of the world, unite," he did not mean to say, "white workers of the world, unite." The Australian worker must learn that the Communist was not trying to introduce cheap labour but to unite the workers of the world against the capitalist offensive.

As an instance of the constructive work done by the Australian Communist Party, Comrade Montefiori quoted recent telegram to the *Times* (London) stating that the two capitalist parties, the National Party and the Country party, were joining forces in order to fight labour. What had aroused the alarm of the capitalists was the likelihood of the Communist Party getting into the Labour Party and forming a Left-wing in the immediate future.

The Communist Party of Australia sent a special message to their comrades in all the countries bordering on the Pacific assuring them that no Communist supported the colour line. And if the Communist Party of Great Britain would take an interest in the Pacific and in Australia, the way would be open towards the formation of a true mass party and the workers

would understand what revolution meant and rally to its cause.

**Comrade Wolfe (Mexico):** Comrade Zinoviev in his report on the American Party announced its struggle against the imperialism of the United States in the Philippines, but made no mention of the economically and politically more important imperialism of that country in Latin America. He related how the United States troops had invaded a half-dozen American countries, how in those and other lands of Latin America, it had set up financial overseers with a mission similar to that of Dawes in Germany, how in other American countries it had financed revolutions and set up autocracies, This had engendered an ever-growing discontent and antagonism against the United States. Santo Domingo, for example, had gone six years without a president because the United States and been unable to find a single Dominican willing to accept the post of the president it had deposed.

Revolts against autocracies set up by the United States were brewing in Venezuela and Peru, and might be expected this year. Owing to the lack of a central agency for the Communist Parties of the two continents, the American Party did not even know that revolts were imminent in those countries. No Communist Party had issued a call to revolt to the proletariat of those two lands, but a liberal intellectual, the Minister of Education in Mexico, had. To the Latin-American mind, bourgeois liberals such as La Follette and Borah had up to now represented the struggle against American Imperialism and the championing of their rights, in place of the Communists representing that championship.

Samuel Gommers of the American Federation of Labour is also President of the Pan-American Federation of Labour, an organisation of the Labour movements of the United States and Latin-American countries. He recently defended the occupation of Haiti by American troops and regularly defended American imperialism. This could he used as a means of arousing the

Latin-American Labour movements against him and thus unseating him as president of the Pan-American Federation. Such a move, could be made only if we had some Continental centre to take charge of Continental problems in the two Americas.

The Profintern would find it easy to affiliate the Latin-American Labour movements. Amsterdam had no real strength in those countries. It was a question of domination by Gompers, by the Anarchists, or by the Red International. Affiliation had been secured almost without a fight in Chile, and in Argentina in two years the Profintern had won forty per cent, of the membership. The work of the Communist International and the Red International had been defective during the past year, through lack of a Spanish language press, lack of a central agency, and other causes. The growing importance of America in the domination of Europe made it imperative that more attention should be given by the International to Latin-American and the organising of Continental resistance to American imperialism there. The European and American Proletariat and the International would find valuable allies there.

**Comrade Bordiga (Italy):** I think that in this congress a general discussion on tactics was necessary.

The formula applied to the present situation is the formula of the united front from below, and not from above. The united front of the workers, of the entire working class, and not a coalition of the leaders of the Communist Party with those of other parties, self-styled workers, is a sufficiently good formula. Because, if we do not wish to compromise all our work of preparing the proletariat politically for revolution, we must not allow it to be supposed that there is any other revolutionary party outside the Communist Party or that the Social- Democratic parties and the Communist parties are

parallel fractions of the working class which are separated by chance, but which might proceed and struggle side by side.

At the same time we do not exclude the possibility of common action, between workers who are already Communist and workers who remain in the Social-Democratic and opportunist parties, or perhaps even in the bourgeois parties.

The phrase which says that the workers' government is the pseudonym or synonym of the dictatorship of the proletariat does not convey the idea it should. We are told, if we say dictatorship of the proletariat, the masses will not understand, if we say workers' government the masses will understand. Now it is just this which I contest, I have never seen the practical use of it. Around the words dictatorship of the proletariat, there are displayed such events, that have so interested the masses of the proletariat of the world, that even the workers of the countries outside Soviet Russia know quite well what it is, and demand it by instinct, even when they are influenced by Social-Democratic leaders. But how can a simple peasant understand the workers' government when we, leaders of the Labour movement, after three years, have not been able to understand it and to give it a satisfactory definition! (Applause.) I simply demand the burial of the Third Party, and at the same time of the tactics and the watchwords of workers' government. But we shall be told: You are bad boys. The International is going to the left, and you are still not content, you still ask for more.

It is not a deviation to the left which we demand in the present situation: it is the rectification of the tactics of the International in a clear and precise manner, and in conformity with the opinion of the majority of the International.

Before going further, I must correct an opinion which Comrade Zinoviev ascribes to me, when he said that I had declared: Either the Fifth Congress will accept my views, that is to say of the Italian left, or we shall organise within the

International a left fraction to fight against the leadership of the International. I did not say that. I said that only in the event of tendency towards a right-wing revisionism in the International would it be necessary to reply by setting up a left fraction. But I did not say that, in the International as it is, or in the International tending to the left, after the Congress that a fraction would be necessary or even admissible. That is a totally different matter, and I beg Comrade Zinoviev to take a good note of it. (**Zinoviev:** With pleasure. Laughter and applause.)

I wish to say sincerely that in the present situation, the International of the revolutionary proletariat must render back to the Russian Communist Party a small part of the numerous services it had received. It is in the International that it must find the extra power which it needs in order to pass through the very difficult situation, in which the attitude of our comrades who are leading it is truly admirable.

## **Fourteenth Session, June 26th**

**Chairman: COMRADE WYNKOOP.**

**Speakers: FRIED, BUCK, HAER, AMTER, SOMMER,  
DE VISSER, LOZOVSKY, VASSILIEV,  
GSCHEGOSCHEWSKY, SAMUELSON,  
GERSKY, FIALA.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Situation.**

**Comrade Fried (Czecho-Slovakia):** The whole activity of the Czecho-Slovakian Party consists in agitation and propaganda. At the most fateful moment, the only weapons it seizes are agitation in the press and in parliament. When the Emergency Law, which threatened to drive the Czech Party underground was being discussed, the Party did nothing but make speeches in Parliament, instead of organising a powerful mass, agitation. Nothing gives a better indication of its attitude than the fact that the parliamentary fraction had an idea of appealing to the League of Nations on behalf of Carpathian Russia. The hundreds of thousands of unemployed were left unorganised. The very name of proletarian dictatorship has vanished from the agitation and propaganda of the Party. With regard to the peasant question, it is only quite recently that anything has been done: with regard to the national question practically nothing has been done. The Party has scarcely developed any anti-militaristic agitation: it is not preparing the masses either ideologically or from the organisational point of view for civil war. The mass of the Party is increasing rapidly, but the old mass and the new mass are not united together by a common struggle. And if Czecho-Slovakia were forced into a really serious situation there is a danger that we should see a

repetition of the Bulgarian failure in an even worse form.

The majority of the delegation blames us, the minority, with forming a fraction, with breaches of discipline, etc., but this cannot be true, because the most important questions in the Party have never been thoroughly discussed, and it has not been possible to take up a clear and well-defined attitude. The discussions which will take place after the congress will show that the masses of the workers stand firmly behind the International. Slovakia and Carpathian Russia have already shown that they understand the questions of the movement. The workers of Red Slovakia were Communists long before those in the rest of the country, and were, only waiting to found the Party until the workers of the whole country were ripe for it. The Party suffers very much, especially in Slovakia and the Carpathians, from the lack of a Hungarian Communist Party. It is the task of the International, partly for the sake of the revolutionary movement in Czecho-Slovakia, to revive the Communist movement in Hungary, with all the means in its power.

The Congress must lead the Czecho-Slovakian Party into a more healthy condition. It must make it possible for the mass of the Party to give a clear answer to the question whether they wish to be fighting Communist Party or a colourless propaganda opposition party.

**Comrade Buck (Canada):** The main problems before the Congress were said to be those of the united front and of the workers' and peasants' government. Comrade MacManus said that these were secondary to the problem of building up a mass party. But the tactics of the united front were really a part of the building up of a mass party. It had been said the policy was to be tactically inside the Labour Party, but, ideologically outside it. But this was no solution of the problem. The Canadian Party had never been, ideologically, inside the

Labour Party, but this had had no effect on the united front. This was also the weakness of the British Party, and one which belonged to the effort to build the united front.

The Canadian Party had been working in the trade unions, etc., influencing and controlling their actions tactically, but this had produced no ideological effect, i.e., it was not revolutionising the masses. Something more than ideological influence was required by the Party. If we were to build up the united front, we must base our activities on the workshops. Many instances could be given of this kind of activity in the Canadian Party. In the mining districts, many of their locals were purely camp locals. And in other industries a similar industrial basis of organisation was adopted. At the same time in some of the cities, the old geographic form of local was maintained. It was everywhere noticed that, where the industrial locals were, the Party was forging ahead, ideologically, etc. Also, in those districts, the Labour Party was stronger and more active than elsewhere. Indeed, in many places, the Labour Party had been almost entirely built up by the Communist Party of Canada.

The solution of the united front problem in Canada, the United States and Great Britain, meant basing the organisational activity of the parties on the factories and workshops. Thus, not only would the desired clash of ideologies be achieved, but it would be brought home to the rank and file.

For Canada and the United States a solution of the problem of the workers' and peasants' government was urgent. The statement that this slogan was a synonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat was not true for Canada and the United States.

A Farmer-Labour Government in Canada and the United States would be a Liberal-Labour Government. In Canada, the farmers had over 100,000 politically organised members, and they were not in any degree revolutionary. Even the most



radical of them had only as their slogan the demand for a Government built railroad, to lower their freights to the Atlantic coast. The question was as to the limitations of the united front. Should the Party strive to build a Labour Government, or should it have an alliance with the farmer elements? An alliance was certainly as far as the Party could go.

In conclusion, Comrade Buck emphasised the importance of co-ordination and solidification of the Canadian and British Parties, on the basis of the many problems which they had to tackle in common. The great thing they needed at the Congress was more definite discussion, and more concrete application of solutions of their problems.

**Comrade Amter (America):** The American question had been neglected not only externally, but internally. In the American Party, as in other parties there were opportunists. Comrade Amter read extracts from articles by Comrade Lore to show that he represented opportunistic tendencies which had not been suppressed by the Central Executive Committee.

Turning to the agrarian crisis, Comrade Amter said that the two countries most affected by the world agrarian crisis were Soviet Russia and America, and realisation of this fact put them in a position to see what was the task of the Communist Party. It was a Leninist method to make concessions to those farmers who were fighting against capitalism in order that they might be drawn closely into co-operation with the workers and thus with the Communist. The official pamphlet of the American Party dealing with the growth of the Labour Party, stated that it would be a mistake of the greatest magnitude to exclude the working farmers from the Labour Party. The co-operation of the farmers and workers had become traditional in America. Comrade Amter quoted figures to show that in many States the Farmer Labour Party contained large groups of industrial workers which held the Party completely under their

control. There were other States in which the membership was composed predominately of farmers, notably the State of Montana, which, he pointed out, was organised by Comrade Dunne, who now repudiated the farmers. They recognised clearly that the workers must predominate over the farmers, and keep the leadership in their hands.

With regard to the economic crisis, Comrade Amter declared that Comrade Dunne ignored one of the most important features for the future activity of the American Party. At the Party convention last January, Comrade Pepper stated that the Party must face the issue of unemployment. Again in February, Comrade Pepper introduced a thesis on unemployment which was rejected by the majority of the Party. The next month the majority issued a thesis, and Comrade Amter agreed with Comrade Varga that in this the Central Executive not only shared the illusions of the bourgeoisie, but went further and did not even believe their admissions. The majority thesis declared that it was certain that unemployment on a large scale would face the working class in the near future. But it might not occur until the summer of 1925. In view of the fact that even Gompers had recognised that unemployment was becoming serious, the failure of the Central Executive to see the issue was the failure to recognise the duties of a Communist Party.

**Comrade Sommer (Germany):** The German delegation welcome the fact that the discussion was brought back to the height of principle by the speech of Comrade Bordiga. It is not only tactical questions, but fundamental principles of the International that we have to discuss here. Some comrades here have criticised not only tactical measures, but the very fundamentals of Leninism. The congress must, therefore, clear up the subject fully.

Leninism implies also fighting within the capitalist system for partial demands, but for the set purpose of organising the

revolution. Radek finds in this principle an element of “putschism,” and for this reason he gave us the task to organise a million members, at the moment when we were on the threshold of revolution. Yes, if we had raised the slogan: “All power to the proletariat,” we would have gained a million members, but we would not have done so by putting organisational questions to the forefront in the course of an acute revolutionary situation.

A mass movement against the Experts’ Report is already afoot in Germany, Soon we may find ourselves again in the midst of decisive fights. It is, therefore, to our interest that the neighbouring countries also have good Bolshevist parties which are engaged in organising the revolution. This should cause us to be even more unsparing in our criticism of the opportunistic mistakes of the Czech Party, In the light of these opportunistic mistakes it becomes quite conceivable why the Czech Party failed to grasp the significance of the controversies within the German and Russian parties. The temporary consolidation of capitalism should not by any means cause us to adapt ourselves to reformism; in a situation like this we should rather draw the sharpest line of demarcation against any reformism and against any liquidatory tendencies, as was done by the 13th Conference of the Russian Communist Party. Only then shall we be able to say that the first congress which meets after the death of Lenin, continues to lead the revolution in the spirit of Lenin.

**De Visser (Holland):** Since 1909, the Dutch Party has conducted an energetic campaign against reformism, and since the world war it has fought for the revolutionary united front. Mistakes were made as a matter of course, but no fighting party is immune against mistakes. I am surprised that Wynkoop is named together with Hoeglund, as we were always not only in agreement with Comrade Zinoviev, but also with Comrade

Kuusinen who at this Congress castigated opportunism as it deserves. The difficulties with the left Gorter-Pannekook Opposition have been overcome, and the Party has taken to heart what Lenin said and wrote about infantile sickness. The recent tactical difference, within the Party have also been satisfactorily settled with the help of the Comintern. In 1911-12 a number of Dutch comrades were very active in the Indian movement. Semaun himself acknowledged at various meetings that the Dutch Party had carried on a thorough and energetic agitation. At the last Dutch Congress we decided to take immediate steps for the formation of factory nuclei and for the Bolshevisation of the Party. We do not look upon parliamentary action as the most important plank of our platform, but concentrate all our energies on the fight against militarism. We also do our utmost to permeate the masses and to convert the big and powerful trade unions into revolutionary workers' organs. As to the German Party, we think that it has consolidated its position after the crisis and that the millions of votes it polled at the Reichstag elections is a proof that it has great possibilities before it.

**Comrade Lozovsky:** Bordiga in his speech reproached the Executive for being too pliable. He has got rather a wild conception of Bolshevik tactics, and an even more wild conception of the tasks proper to the International Staff of the revolution. The International is not an automatic machine, which always performs the same movement; it ought not to be as fixed as a telegraph pole; it is a fighting organisation, which adjusts its methods of combat in order to attain its essential object—to win over the masses for the social revolution. What should we say of a general who was guided by the "immutable laws" of war, and never adapted his strategy and tactics to changing conditions; who could not rapidly alter the disposition of his troops and their grouping, pass from the

offensive to the defensive, from fighting in the open country to fighting round a fixed base, and so on! The most that could be said of a general like this would be that he was only a novice, and not a strategist.

The genius who produced the strategy of Bolshevism, Lenin, gave the Communist International enough examples of the adaptability of the Bolshevik Party. In this connection, a careful study of the work and the political activity of Lenin would be highly profitable for Comrade Bordiga.

A careful consideration of the whole activities of the Russian Communist Party will show that its apparent and formal oscillations (war Communism, the new economic policy, the creation of poor peasants' committees and later their suppression) had nothing in common with the hesitation and vacillation peculiar to reformism. This is the true Communist | policy in the best sense of the word—that is to say, the power of pursuing the essential aim by different means and different methods to suit different conditions

The Communist International can no more accept the slogan of the united only from below, than it can the slogan of the extension of these tactics to all countries, irrespective of the concrete conditions of the class struggle.

**Comrade Samuelson (Sweden):** Our members consider the Comintern as an organisation which asks not for formal adherence, but for action and fighting. The reservations of Comrade Hoeglund are unfortunately not an exception, but they have rather become a system, a sequence of ultra-right deviations. There was a time when Comrade Hoeglund objected to changing the name of the Party from "Left Socialist" to "Communist." He was opposed to a clear formulation of the point of the programme which deals with the arming of the proletariat, of course, from the standpoint of "tactics," but it is always so: if one wants to prevent the

carrying out of the proper thing, he does so not on the grounds of principle, but on the grounds of "tactics." On the question of centralism, Comrade Hoeglund was dissatisfied with the decision of the Fourth Congress and he threatened even to give up his mandate to the Executive. He has not yet given up his standpoint.

Comrade Hoeglund spoke yesterday about our gross violation of discipline. What did our gross violation of discipline consist of? It is that we cannot sit by silently and passively while the majority in our party are undermining the authority of the Communist International. On the basis of all these facts we find ourselves compelled to stand in opposition. Our present differences are the reflection of different conceptions on fundamental questions. It is only a tactical manoeuvre on the part of Hoeglund when he endeavours to shift the controversial questions from the sphere of organisation to the domain of personal questions.

The Swedish minority is of the same opinion as Comrade Zinoviev that it is now more essential than ever to have a fighting Communist Party, a discipline of action, as the fundamental principle of the Communist International. If this is recognised, the present dispute in the Swedish Communist Party will soon disappear. (Applause.)



## **Fifteenth Session, June 26th. (Evening)**

**Chairman: COMRADE WYNKOOP.**

**Concluding speeches by VARGA and ZINOVIEV.**

### **Discussion on E.C. Report and World Situation.**

**Comrade Varga:** The central question is, in my opinion, whether the present disorganisation can be ended and whether a so-called “normal” capitalism can be revived. Economically, the class contradictions within the capitalist system have become more acute. The distribution of wealth has moved in favour of the small groups of wealthy capitalists. There is an agrarian crisis which is spreading over the whole world, and there is a special crisis in Western Europe resulting from the industrialisation of the former agrarian countries and of the overseas countries. Politically, however, capitalism has strengthened its power. To deny the possibility of this period of social crisis coming to an end would be utopian.

Comrade Dengel asserts that like Kautsky, I foretold a super-imperialistic capitalist epoch which the contradictions of capitalism would be so great that they would have to end.” Is it, possible that the contradictions between the various imperialist super-powers, can end? The possibility exists. Of the several great imperialist powers, the World War annihilated three. Russia, which retired owing to the revolution; Austria-Hungary which was smashed, and Germany, which was crashed and reduced to a colony. One can imagine that in the next world war, one or two other imperialist powers will be excluded and be degraded into objects of imperialist world policy. It is not

un-Marxian to assume that a single imperialist power or an united Anglo-American imperialism may so hold the rest of the world under that further wars will be impossible. If Comrade Dengel understands super-imperialism in this sense and denies it, I cannot agree with him at all.

Comrade Dengel says that "Comintern would be running a very great danger if it accepted such a development of capitalism. If, I think that this expression is absolutely out of place. On the contrary, a tendency towards strengthening capitalism exists, it would be a betrayal of the interests of the proletariat to conceal the truth. I do not mean to say that such a prospect of capitalism recovering exists; but what we must fight is the attitude that if such a prospect does exist, it is dangerous to speak of it. I think that Comrade Dengel is considerably influenced by the anti-Leninist so-called Left in Germany, although he spoke against it. This is clear from the fact that he accuses me of "voluntarism." He says I place much too much emphasis on the will to fight of the proletariat. Comrades, at this congress you accused the leaders of not wanting to fight, although no objective revolutionary situation existed. It is an absolute contradiction to say that we are condemning the Rights because they would not fight in the revolutionary situation, and on the other hand to rebuke me because I assert that the proletarian will-to-fight is an essential factor for the victory of the proletariat.

Comrade Dengel further states that I am guilty of a contradiction when I say that there is a tendency on the part of the individual capitalist countries to isolate themselves and at the same time speak of the international. The bourgeoisie of each country endeavour to reserve the internal market as a monopoly for itself. To that end it erects high customs barriers around its own country. Foreign capital, which hitherto had been accustomed to sell certain goods in the countries which are cut off by protective tariffs, thereupon proceeds to transfer



its production to those countries.

Allow me in conclusion to deal with one question which was not mentioned here at all. Not a single word was said in the debate of the Hungarian proletariat. Five years ago, in addition to Russia, there existed another comparatively strong proletarian country—Hungary. The Hungarian proletariat was the only proletariat besides the Russian which set up its dictatorship and maintained it for four and half months. It is worth thinking about, for there once existed a powerful working class movement in Hungary. The Hungarian trade unions are the only trade unions in the world which have gained in membership during the last three years. I believe that an unique historical situation exists in Hungary, which has hitherto hindered the creation of a Communist Party in the organised sense. The more the bourgeoisie of a country have felt what a proletarian dictatorship is the more bitterly reaction persecutes the Communists. The task of the Hungarian Party is one which has never before existed in the history of the world—after a dictatorship, to build up a party from the bottom upward, in the very period of terror and illegality. I think the time has come when we can proceed seriously to create a movement in Hungary. It would be useful if the Congress expressed the view that the Executive of the Communist International should now make an energetic attempt to overcome all the difficulties arising out of fractional strife and to give the Hungarian Party its full support. (Applause.)

**Comrade Zinoviev:** To begin with I should like to supplement my analysis of the world economic situation. I have already pointed out in my main report that on the whole I am in agreement with the brochure and theses of Comrade Varga. Certainly many corrections can and must be made therein, and there could be no objection to a certain amount of re-drafting of the theses by a special commission. But I believe,

comrades, that we must give preliminary consideration here to the question of whether or not they are fundamentally correct.

In *Die Internationale*, published by the German party, we find in an article by K. S., a statement like this:

“In the activities of the Third Congress the clear perspective of world revolution was replaced by a general economic forecast, which signified a distinct step backward in some particulars, and especially in the question of methods.”

The question asked is: What do we really need, a forecast or a revolution? It, seems that the forecast is the most important thing to some writers. In so far as we may speak of a forecast, the Third Congress was absolutely correct. Events have already shown that the Third Congress rightly analysed the world economic situation. Events have not proceeded at a more rapid pace than was foreseen by the Third Congress. Of what use would be a forecast entirely favourable to us and unfavourable to the bourgeoisie if it were not later vindicated by facts? It would have been very simple to draw up a paper “forecast” at the Third Congress showing that in the next year or so we would witness the complete and final collapse of capitalism. But what sense would there be in that if it did not correspond with the truth?

We have learned much during this period, and we have partially come to understand that we must handle the term “collapse of capitalism” very carefully. The downfall of capitalism is absolutely inevitable; capitalism is doomed, but we must see things in their real light, and interpret the times more rationally than we have hitherto done.

You have heard Comrade Dengel’s estimate of Comrade Varga’s report. After hearing the statement of the German declaration on this question the fact becomes of secondary importance. But that does not prevent us discussing the essential point of disagreement with individual comrades,

especially with such an esteemed comrade as Dengel. Comrade Kreibich, by the way, the exponent of an entirely different political viewpoint, held exactly the same opinion of Comrade Varga's report as Comrade Dengel.

Dengel would have liked to have had our theoreticians and economists mark out clearly the line of march. Capitalism will collapse sooner or later, revolution is inevitably approaching, and is likely to break out at any moment.

### **We Must See Things as They Are.**

Of course I understand this feeling on the part of revolutionists, especially on the part of our German comrades who find themselves in an unique position. But comrades, we want to conquer, and not merely to shake our lists in the air; and to do this we must see things in their true light.

Comrade Varga was commissioned to outline for us the world economic situation, and not merely the condition in Germany. Germany is a very important country for the revolution. But comrades, it is quite rightly pointed out that the Anglo-Saxon countries, and especially England, also have a certain importance for the world revolution. If my memory does not deceive me, it was Karl Marx who said: "Revolution without England would be a storm in a teacup." And so, while paying our due to the German movement, we must turn our attention to the world economic situation as well. We must remember that even in Germany, notwithstanding the many symptoms of the decline and disruption of capitalism, we have also certain symptoms of its consolidation. Every worker feels this in his own factory. There is no use in our denying this fact. There are many questions to which it is no easy matter to answer simply yes or no, and consequently many articles and speeches betray marks of indecisions—of sitting on the fence.

The situation is very complicated, and it is not Varga's fault that certain symptoms of the strengthening of capitalism exist. Unfortunately it is so and we cannot simply shut our eyes and say that no such phenomena are to be observed. We must see things as they are.

An analysis of the international economic situation is extremely difficult and complex. The situation is very kaleidoscopic, and cannot be grasped on the basis of a subjective approach. To what conclusions does Comrade Varga's analysis lead us? He says: "In practically every part of the world a general agrarian crisis is to be observed. In America a severe industrial crisis is beginning. In individual European countries the crisis has been mitigated at the expense of neighbouring countries. Simultaneously a sharpening of class contradictions not only relatively, but absolutely, is taking place—an indication of the general retrogression in the condition of the working class."

Comrades, can this be called pacifism? Varga, rightly supposes that the present economic situation is such that the decisive role may be played by the subjective factor—the extent of the organisation of the proletariat, the will to power, the readiness to fight, the strength of the Communist Parties—this certainly is not pacifism. This objective situation may be as revolutionary as you please, but if the will to power is lacking, if the oppressed masses lack sufficient revolutionary experience, if there is no party—then nothing will come of it.

What would have happened if we had declared at the Third World Congress: "The world situation is such that capitalism is at its last gasp. And then it had turned out that the Fourth Congress was convened, and the Fifth, and capitalism was still hale and hearty in many countries. Such self-deception would hardly have enabled us to maintain our prestige among the members of our party, not to speak of the workers, who sympathised with us.

## **Two Prospects for World Capitalism.**

There are two outlooks for world capitalism. One, roughly speaking, is that capitalism may vegetate for a comparatively long period, neither living nor dying, the other, also quite a possible eventuality, is that a more rapid development of events are speeding up the collapse of capitalism in a number of the most important countries, and leading to a swifter decline in others. Certainly, historically speaking, capitalism has left only a very short span of life. In the life of a single human being, five, ten, twenty years—is a long period. But in the history of the world, such a period is very short indeed. We, the Comintern, on whom depends the task of organising the world revolution, must be able to make our tactics conform to either one of these possibilities. Our main attention must be concentrated on the less favourable one. If the better one should be realised, and the collapse of capitalism comes more quickly, then it will be easy enough to adapt ourselves to the more favourable situation. Affairs would go badly with us if we make all our plans on the basis of a smooth and rapid development. This is true in relation to each country separately, and even more true in relation to the world economic situation as a whole, I know that among the Left leaders of the German Communist Party there are very influential members who consider that the collapse will be delayed for decades yet, even in Germany. I do not think that is true. But it is useless to jump on Varga when he displays caution in his estimate of the world-wide economic situation. I consider that the theses of Comrade Varga are on the whole correct.

## **The International Political Situation. The Meaning of the Pacifist-Democratic Era.**

I should now like to make a few supplementary remarks on the question of the international political situation. In my report I declared that Fascism and bourgeois reaction on an international scale reached their apogee at the time of the Fourth World Congress. The Congress already at that time foretold that this movement would give way to a different “era”—the pacifist-democratic era.

This forecast has now proved correct, but this new period will not be of long duration. In a number of countries the situation will again become aggravated, emergency and martial law will once more be introduced, Fascism will reappear, etc.

What was the situation during the imperialist war? It was incredibly difficult; almost everywhere martial law was introduced. At the end of the war there was a certain blossoming out of democracy; in a number of countries there were bourgeois-democratic revolutions. However, Fascism very quickly replaced this period, and the most severe bourgeois reaction swept a number of countries, with very important results. It was inevitable that the Communist Party should appear as the only group who could lead the working class to battle and seize the victory from the bourgeoisie. After this the wave of the pacifist-democratic era rose again. Messieurs the Social-Democrats consider it all a very simple matter after martial law-democracy, then again martial law, and then again democracy as if there had never been a change at all.

### **Crisis of the Fascist Regime in Italy.**

But it is not so simple that. Let us take Italy for instance. It.

might be an exaggeration to say that a new wave of revolution, beginning with a general strike, etc., was already rising there (exact information regarding what occurred in connection with the murder of Matteotti has not yet appeared in the press) but it is undoubted that a new situation has arisen in Italy. This is clear from the fact that the Communist organ *L'Unita*, for the last two numbers has carried on its first page, in large type, the slogan "Down with the government of murderers!" and Mussolini has not suppressed the paper. This is certainly a symptom that another new "era" is approaching. In spite of the fact that Mussolini may say he has no intention of leaving the government at the present moment, the very fact that the question has already been raised is an indication of the "spirit of the times." Here we have the first significant and profound internal crisis in the Fascist regime in Italy.

It, however, bourgeois "democracy" again gets the upper hand in Italy, this "new" democracy will be nothing like the brand of 1920. You are well aware that the Socialist Party of Italy was a large mass party at that time.

The working class felt that it was free, and bourgeois democracy blossomed forth. But at that time the Italian workers did not understand the essence of democracy. The Socialist Party was full of democratic illusions, and the workers were politically unsophisticated. Do you think for a moment that when Fascism falls there will be simply a return to the former conditions of things! Not a bit of it! A great change has taken place in the working class. They have lost their "democratic" illusions; they have paid dearly for the lessons. An entirely different political situation, an entirely different "democracy" will come. The working class has been enriched with entirely new political experience. We must not lose sight of this fact. As a matter of fact, not only the Social-Democrats, but the Communists have been prone to analyse the situation too simply. We thought first there was democracy,

now comes Fascism, and after Fascism will come inevitably the dictatorship of the proletariat. It might happen so, but then again it might not. For instance, it is possible that the Mussolini regime in Italy might be replaced, not directly by the dictatorship of the proletariat, but by a new brand of “democracy” not at all like the democracy of 1920, and during the regime of the “new” democracy the dictatorship of the proletariat might be prepared.

The situation is not so simple. We cannot say that this will all happen according to formula: first the letter D for democracy, then F for Fascism, and finally R for Revolution. This is not such a simple matter as Marx’s formula: commodity-money-commodity. There may be some other denouncement. We may also find here a unique type of “surplus value” in the form of the political experience accumulated by the working class. If Italy enters upon an “era of democracy” the working class will be ready for it enriched with new political experience. The role of our party would then be different, as that would mean an essential change in the situation.

### **The Democratic-Pacifist “Era”—for How Long?**

How long can this democratic-pacifist “era” last! It is difficult to make a definite statement on this question, but, as far as one can judge, it will be of very short duration, for instance in France—the country of political manoeuvring and bourgeois democracy. There the left bloc will break down sooner than is generally assumed. Its position is very unstable. The victory of the left bloc was achieved by only 300,000 votes; for the right bloc, including all its tendencies, polled 3,600,000 votes, and the left bloc 3,000,000 votes, Herriot initiated his government activity by appointing six ministers of



Poncaré's old Cabinet, and has retained the latter's policy in his foreign politics. The left bloc made very big promises to the working class, and sees itself unable to fulfil any of them. That is why one is justified in assuming that the democratic-pacifist "era" will soon come to an end in France. If the working class and its Communist Party show weakness, France cannot escape fascism. How long will Herriot remain at his post, and how soon will Doriot take his place? (Applause and laughter).

It is impossible to say how many months the new "era" will last, and how long we shall have bourgeois dictatorship with us, but one thing is certain: the development of events is from Herriot towards Doriot. No one can say how slow or how quick this transition will be, but it is self-evident that the process of disintegration within the left bloc is more rapid than before. The left bloc will soon come to grief. What does the whole pacifist-democratic "era" mean for capitalism? What has brought it about? Does it coincide with the consolidation of the bourgeoisie, or with the decline of capitalism? It coincides, of course, with the latter. Events are developing fairly rapidly, although we do not always notice it. Take, for instance, the most recent events: I suppose you all remember the former crisis of the bourgeoisie in the pre-war period. For instance, the Dreyfus affair in France kept people talking for years. It was considered to be a very serious crisis within the bourgeois social order; or for instance, the struggle against the three grade electoral system in Russia. What is all this compared with the recent fights! For instance, when prior to the war a strike took place in Belgium for universal suffrage, Comrade Rosa Luxemburg wrote long treatises about this event. Compare this with what is going on at present almost every day. For instance, the assassination of Mattcottti, the occupation of the Ruhr, the assassination of Rathenau, the risings in Bulgaria, Hamburg, and Cracow, the left bloc in Franco, the Labour Government in Great Britain, the magnitude of the strike wave,

the growth of the revolutionary movement in the East, etc. To-day, if half a million workers are on strike, there are about twenty lines concerning it in the press, and our attention is soon occupied with other things. This shows the enormous progress of the class struggle, and the imminence of final victory.

It is self-evident that the democratic pacifist "era" is not by any means a sign that good times are coming, when all questions will be peacefully and painlessly settled by "democracy" in parliament. This "era" is correlated to the collapse of capitalism.

On the political field the symptoms make their appearance sooner and are more clearly felt than on the economic field. Of course, we know economics are the foundation and the definition of everything. But before this or that process is ripe, and when the new change is just about beginning to set it, political symptoms are sometimes much more characteristic.

I reiterate that: The democratic-pacifist era is a sign of the disintegration of capitalism, of its decline and of the inevitable crisis within it. Mussolini and Poincaré on the one hand, and MacDonald and Herriot on the other hand, further the proletarian revolution. It does not matter in the least if their methods are those of "democracy" or those of avowed fascism. They only add grist to the mill of proletarian revolution. Both these regimes cost us very dear, for both of them exact great sacrifices from the working class. Nevertheless, both of them bring proletarian revolution nearer. Therefore, we must beware of taking a too simple view of the matter. In this case it would be out of place to keep, to the simple analogy of Marx's formula: "Money—commodity—money,"—"fascism—democracy—fascism." In every country this is a very complicated and peculiar process.

On the whole, this is the chapter of capitalist collapse in the history of mankind. This "era" cannot be of very long duration. The Social-Democrats are endeavouring to save the

bourgeoisie by throwing lifebelts to it, but these lifebelts are of no use for they are made of the poorest material. They will only drag the bourgeoisie quicker to the bottom of the sea.

Objectively; the counter-revolutionary “labour” government of Ramsay MacDonald, generally speaking, must be detrimental to the bourgeoisie. Comrade Lenin was a thousand times right when he said at the Second Congress: a “Labour” government will come into power in Great Britain. This Labour government must be supported by the Communists, but it must be the support which the cord gives to the person on the gibbet. At the moment when the cleverest bourgeoisie of the world must appeal to British Menshevism, it becomes evident that it can no longer maintain its power by its former methods. Of course, it would be wrong to speak of the Menshevik party as a true Labour Party, for it is not a revolutionary party. But menshevism is frequently a being which looks with one eye to the left and with the other eye to the right. Menshevism can help (perhaps against its wish) to disintegrate and undermine the position of the bourgeoisie.

Therefore, we must have very clear views on this matter, and our education must undergo frequent changes because we are going through a new democratic pacifist “era.” We must explain to the workers of the world what this “era” means. We must make them understand that this “era” cannot last and that the Social-Democrats are again deceiving the workers. On the historical arena we are the only force which has no illusions about the “labour” government—of this “democracy” and “pacifism.” And because we are the only force of this kind in the whole world, we must set ourselves the task to find out and to expose all the concrete characteristics which differentiate the present bourgeoisie regime from the former.

### **Communism and the Peasantry.**

A few days ago I read an article in the *Vorwärts* of June 19, called "Five Minutes to Twelve." The Landtag deputy of the Bavarian Peoples' Party, Dr. Schlittenbauer, made the following statement in the Landtag: I will quote him in full: "The crisis in Germany is by no means over. In the dim and distant future, we are threatened not only with the Communist peril, but also with the peasant social revolution. If the present policy of the Government and the Reichstag towards the German peasantry will be kept up for another six months, the danger will become acute. Such is the inevitable logic of events, for the present situation is unbearable. It destroys peasant farming with a swiftness which is uncanny. When the pressure will become unbearable, when the economic situation will be completely undermined, we must expect an explosion—the peasant revolution; and peasant revolutions are thorough, cruel, and terrible. History teaches us that a peasant revolution means arson and gibbets. This must be prevented, the time for action has come, another five minutes and the fatal hour will strike."

Well, comrades, if I did not know anything more of Germany but what this bourgeois tells us, his words alone would show me that this question is very acute in a country where there are no large masses of consciously revolutionary peasants and where our only task would be to win over to our side some actions of the peasantry and to neutralise others. Dr. Schlittenbauer is quite right when he says that peasant revolutions are thorough and cruel and accompanied by much shedding of blood and destruction. We in Russia know that this is so. In view of such a situation, it would be unpardonable to underestimate this question. It is not a secondary question, but

is closely connected with the question of proletarian dictatorship.

I read that German fascists have elaborated a very cleverly compiled demagogic “program of action.” What is the meaning of a fascist “program of action,” for the peasantry? Perhaps some of our ultra-left comrade will say: “As we believe in the dictatorship of the proletariat, the peasant question does not concern us.” Or at best I might say: We shall form a peasant commission in the Central Committee, and we shall appoint people to write theses which, alas, are never read by anyone. Such things happen sometimes. Things are no better in agrarian countries. For instance, I want to draw your attention to the fact that Averescu’s counter-revolutionary party in Rumania a short while ago convened a congress which was attended by 10,000 peasants. Probably, there were rich peasants at this congress. But the fact alone that ten thousand peasants attended the congress is very significant. The Polish bourgeois parties in Warsaw also convene peasant congresses, which are generally well attended. And in the Bavarian Landtag they say: It is five minutes to twelve, and the peasant revolution is imminent. All this goes to show that the peasant question must be one of the most important questions for us. And not only in agrarian countries, but also in industrial countries where, as in Germany, the situation is revolutionary.

I think that in such cases we must act in a revolutionary manner. The time of theses is passed, and Social-Democratic wiseacres who say that we have nothing to do with the peasantry, are obsolete. Yes, comrades, as long as we remain a guild party, the peasantry will not concern us. But if we really mean to establish a workers’ and peasants’ government and proletarian hegemony, we must carry our propaganda right into the midst of the peasantry.

I will give you a couple of examples from the history of the Russian revolution.

Communists are now achieving great successes among the workers of Germany. There we have behind us considerable number of big factories and works. What was done in Russia must now be applied to Germany; when we saw that a factory was in sympathy with us, we convened a general meeting and said: "It is of the greatest importance that we should work among the peasantry. Let us, as a first measure, select twenty-five men and send them to the peasants in this or that province. This requires money, and the Party has no money. Let us, therefore, make a collection among the workers. Let us form groups of five Communists and twenty non-party workers, and let us send them for one or two months to various villages. And their families will be supported by us until their return. This is how we acted. In this work the wives of the working men played a very important part. The working men wrote letters to the villages and sent leaflets and newspapers. The proletarians spent their holiday for propaganda purposes, for the workers knew that the Communist Party looked upon propaganda in the villages as one of its most important tasks.

If what this Bavarian member of the Landtag says is true—that it is five minutes to twelve by the clock—if the tension is so great among the peasantry, it must find an echo in the army, for although many officers are members of the nobility, the peasant elements prevail in the army. Who was it who always crushed every revolutionary movement? Who beat us in 1905, who destroyed the Bavarian Soviet Republic and crushed a number of other risings in Germany after 1918? Mainly peasants' sons.

This applies particularly to agrarian and semi-agrarian countries. Once and for all we must put an end to a state of affairs when our Parties even in these countries do not know how to approach the peasant question. Some of these Parties did not even know the exact number of peasants in their respective countries, nor the conditions under which these

peasants lived. What would you say if, before setting out on a journey and taking into consideration all kinds of circumstances, you would omit to consider a mere “trifle”—the distance and the obstacles which you would be likely to meet on the road, etc? The same happens with the Communist Party when it says: I want to achieve a victory and to establish Socialism, but there is a trilling matter of which I am ignorant, namely the composition of the population, the proportion of peasantry in it, and the economic position and aspirations of the peasants.

What would you say about a surgeon who omitted to examine the state of his patient’s heart before performing the operation! But this is an analogous case. You wish to perform a serious operation such as achieving a victory over the bourgeoisie, and forget a mere “trifle” getting to know about the position of the rural population which forms the majority of the total population of an agrarian country.

Therefore, I think that it would be much more useful not to haggle so much about the pacifist tendencies of Comrade Varga, but concentrate upon the main point, for if we do not do so, we cease to be a revolutionary Communist Party, and if we cease to be that we cannot achieve final victory.

### **Question of Tactics.**

Comrades; I am coming now to the question of tactics. It was said here (these were the first words uttered by Comrade Radek against us) that our Congress is occupied with the revision and the liquidation of the united front tactics elaborated by the Fourth Congress. Other comrades followed suit, including (I am sorry to say) Comrade Zetkin from whom I expected something better. It is self-evident that what was elaborated by one congress must, if necessary, be corrected or

altered at the next congress. Otherwise, there would be no necessity to convene congresses.

We could meet once and decide everything once and for all. If there is a proposal to alter or supplement this or that part of some resolution or other, this does not mean that a revision and a liquidation of the foundation of former tactics are contemplated.

Comrades, I think I shall be able to show that it is not we who want to revise the decisions of the Third and Fourth Congresses, but Radek and other comrades of the right. The thing is that the right must show itself now in its true light. It has become evident that these comrades of the right cannot work harmoniously with the Executive, and are, therefore, endeavouring to shift the responsibility on to someone else.

### **Comrade Radek's Right Tendencies.**

Comrade Radek said that I admitted being "led astray" by him. He said so repeatedly, Comrade Zetkin, I am sorry to say, repeated this. I expected from her something better than a mere repetition of Radek's words. The question of who was "led astray" has a certain political significance. Comrade Zetkin said: How is it that for two or five, years the Executive went with Radek, and that all of a sudden he is considered to belong to the right tendency. She never doubted that the situation was somewhat different, namely, it was not the Executive which went with Radek four or five years, but it was Radek who went with the Executive (Applause). And comrades, this was actually the case, which was very laudible on the part of Radek. I think that this is easily understood.

If you will allow me comrade's, I will place before you some facts of a political and biographical nature. This is absolutely necessary as the question of who was "led astray"



and who followed who, has a great political significance. Comrades, it generally happens that differences accumulate gradually and that only towards the end quantity becomes quality, when “all of a sudden” two completely different lines are discovered. This does not happen in one night or our hour, but frequently lasts a considerable time.

I have reckoned up that there were as many as ten differences between us and Radek in the course of several years of joint work in the Comintern.

The first and rather serious and acute difference between Radek and myself happened during the Second World Congress. It was on the question of Paul Levi and also on the question of our attitude to the right and the left. Some of the comrades perhaps remember my speech in the Executive in which I said: Yes, we will fight relentlessly against the right. At that time this was meant for Crispin, Dittmann, and others who were coquetting with us and were trying to get into the Comintern. Already at that time I said that we would fight against these people as against our class enemies. As to the left syndicalists, the ultra-left at that time they had a considerable following. But in this left there were honest revolutionary working class elements. They had confused notions, but nevertheless I considered them to be our comrades in the common cause. They were not our class enemies. Levi thought that the Comintern could accept into its ranks only “real Communists,” but not revolutionary syndicalists. At that time the question of the German Communist Labour Party loomed big. I was in favour of receiving it into our ranks as a sympathising party. These tactics were correct, but Levi and the then “right” Central Committee of the German Communist Party, which was under his influence, and also Radek, were against it. This was the first serious difference, and already the Second Congress (the First Congress was but small).

The second difference was in connection with our attitude

to the German Communist Labour Party. We had many collisions on this question.

The third difference arose in connection with the first open letter of the German Central Committee to the Social-Democrats, written by Radek. Some comrades, including Bukharin and myself, were against this letter, as they were afraid that Levi and the elements under his influence would not use these tactics for revolutionary strategical purposes, but for quite other purposes, as they eventually did. That is why we were at first against the open letter.

Comrade Lenin intervened and settled the dispute. Since then we watched Levi more carefully. Subsequently it showed itself that on the Levi question we were right, and Comrade Lenin acknowledged this.

The fourth difference arose on the question of the Berlin Conference of the Three Internationals. You will probably remember that Radek's attitude was condemned in two articles—one written by Comrade Lenin, and the other by myself. Radek transgressed the bounds of united front tactics and made the same opportunist mistake as now.

Comrade Clara, I would like to ask you—at that time did the Executive go with Radek, did Lenin go with Radek, or did Radek go with the Executive? At that time Radek gave in and recognised his mistake. This was all the better for him.

The fifth difference arose on the Norwegian question. When we sent Radek to Norway, he immediately made a rotten "one-sided" compromise with Tranmael. In that case we could not publicly disavow Radek for reasons which I need not explain.

The sixth difference arose in connection with Radek's attitude to the German left. Everyone knows that between Radek and myself there was a heated, if not open, contention on this question. On the whole, Radek went with Brandler, except in a few cases, and supported his organisational threats

addressed to the left. I did not always support the left, for we did not know the new leaders very well, and thought that Radek was probably better acquainted with the various comrades.

I did not always see the situation clearly, but there was one thing on which I was quite sure: I was convinced that we must come to an agreement with the left at all cost.

The seventh difference: whether the “workers’ government” is synonymous with dictatorship or not. I will discuss this a little later.

The eighth difference was connected with the Leipsic Party Congress. The question in dispute were the theses on the “workers’ government within the framework of bourgeois democracy,” which Bukharin and myself criticised, while Radek defended it.

The ninth difference was in connection with the taxation programme, the confiscation of 51 per cent, and so on. We were against all this, not because we rejected partial demands in general, but because we favoured the bringing forward only of partial demands capable of arousing the interest of the masses, and not artificial demands of a bureaucratic nature.

The tenth difference was in connection with a very important question. During the September and October events of 1923, we were not unanimous on everything. I have already related in the press how Radek was opposed to the organisation of a one day’s anti-fascist campaign. But this is after all not so important. Much more important was his attitude at the September (1923) conference with the German comrades in Moscow. We discussed the question as to whether the time had not come in Germany to bring forward the slogan of the organisation of Soviets of Workers’ Deputies. Radek was against it. Unfortunately, the representatives of the German left agreed with him on this question (Thalmann: Not all.

At that time, even the left said: Factory and workshop

committees are sufficient, in fact they are Soviets (we ourselves thought so), we do not as yet require Soviets, this would mean much parallel work, etc. Since the left were making concessions, we also had to follow suit.

Comrade Radek also objected to my calling the Saxon events a banal parliamentary farce. I have something to say on this matter. In answer to his assertions, I will acquaint you with what I wrote on the entry of Communists into the government in "Problems of the German Revolution."

"The entry of German Communists into the Saxon Government can be justified only if sufficient guarantees are provided that the government apparatus will be used in the interests of the working class, that the arming of tens of thousands of workers for the fight against Bavarian and German fascism will be immediately taken in hand, that bourgeois officials will be actually eliminated from the government apparatus, and that economic measures of a revolutionary nature and directed against the bourgeoisie be at once applied.

"If the present Saxon government will really make Saxony a red country capable (at least to some extent of becoming the rallying point for all the revolutionary proletarian forces of the country, the German proletariat will understand and will support the efforts of the Saxon government. But if this does not happen, German Communists must use the Saxon episode only for the purpose of demonstrating to the masses that there is no backbone in the "left" Social-Democrats and that the Social-Democratic leaders are counter-revolutionaries, who reject the issue of revolutionary tasks."

### **"Problems of the German Revolution"**

I wrote in this strain at the very beginning of the Saxon

“experiment.” After a few days it became clear to me that the right elements of the German Communist Party were converting our tactics into an opportunistic farce.

On the Fifth of November, 1923, I proposed that a confidential letter be sent to the German Party to the effect that the Saxon experiment had become a parliamentary farce. Comrades, we need not be ashamed of this letter. It was not a bad document. I drafted the letter which was discussed by a commission consisting of Comrades Kolarov, Zetkin, Zinoviev, Kuusinen, and others. Comrade Clara Zetkin took an active part in this and made many political alterations, as well as alterations of style. In the end, the letter was adopted unanimously. And what was the position at that time? Did the Executive follow Comrade Zetkin, or vice versa? The latter was fortunately the case. But what is rather unfortunate is Comrade Zetkin’s unwillingness to follow the Executive now when the situation is much clearer than in November. It is, as I say, very unfortunate that she is no longer, with us because of the friendship and feelings of comradely solidarity with those who have at present dissociated themselves from Comintern lines. Unfortunately, she put up the same attitude at the Third Congress of the Comintern in connection with Paul Levi. “We cannot leave them in the lurch.” Comrade Zetkin deserves all praise for such friendship, but dialectically, this good trait of her character becomes a political error. Her warm-heartedness and kindness, which all of us love and value so much, becomes, dialectically, a political mistake.

### **Have we Revised the Resolutions of the Fourth Congress?**

Now, comrades, permit me to deal with our alleged revision of the resolutions of the Fourth Congress. It seemed that on this question I expressed myself somewhat inaptly,

thereby giving rise to some misunderstanding. I quoted the phrase about the coalition of all the Labour Parties. Comrade Kreibich snatched at this: did you not yourself speak of a “coalition of all Labour parties,” for this is the very tactic of the united front, and of the workers’ government. My mistake was that I did not go on to read the following few lines, in which it is said:

“The fundamental tasks of a workers’ government should be to arm the proletariat, to disarm the bourgeois counter-revolutionary organisations, to establish control over production, to shift the main burden of tactics to the possessing classes, and to break the resistance of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.”

I will not quote this resolution in greater detail. This is necessary because an attempt is being made to create a whole legend about our supposed revision and liquidation of the tactics of the united front, and of the workers’ government. This will prove somewhat tedious, but it is necessary.

This is what the Fourth Congress and in its resolution:

“The application of the tactics of the united front signifies that the Communist vanguard marches at the head of the everyday struggle of the large masses for their immediate and vital interests. For the sake of this struggle, the Communists are prepared even to negotiate with the treacherous leaders of the Social-Democrats and the Amsterdamers. The attempt of the Second International to interpret the united front as an organisational fusion of all the “Labour parties” must, of course, be categorically repudiated. In Germany the “fusion” of the Social-Democrats and Independents virtually amounts to nothing else but enabling the Social-Democratic leaders to betray some fresh sections of the workers to the bourgeoisie.

“The existence of independent Communist parties, and their complete liberty of action in regard to the bourgeoisie and

to the counter-revolutionary social democracy, constitute the most important historical achievement of the proletariat, which the Communists will not give up under any circumstance. The Communist parties alone defend the interests of the proletariat as a whole.

“In the same way the tactics of the united front do not at all imply the so-called “election combinations” at the top, calculated to promote parliamentary aims of one kind or another.

“The tactics of the united front are nothing else but an offer made by the Communists to wage a common struggle with all the workers belonging to other parties or other groups, or not belonging to any parties at all, in defence of the elementary vital interest of the working class against the bourgeoisie. Any action taken even for the most significant everyday demand is a source of revolutionary enlightenment and revolutionary education, because the experience of this struggle will convince the toilers of the inevitability of revolution and of the significance of Communism.

“The fundamental tasks of the tactics of the united front is agitate for and organise the union of the working masses. The tactics of the united front can be properly carried out only “from the bottom,” directly with the masses of the working class. At the same time, however, the Communists, under certain circumstances, cannot afford to refuse negotiations with the leaders of the hostile Labour parties. But the masses must be constantly kept informed about the progress of such negotiations. Nevertheless, even while negotiating with the leaders, the independence of the Communist Party and of its agitation must not be subjected to restriction.

“It goes without saying that the tactics of the united front must be applied differently in the various countries, to suit the concrete circumstances. But in those cases, when, in the principle capitalist countries, the objective circumstances have

already become ripe for the Socialist revolution, and when the Social-Democratic parties, led by the counter-revolutionary leaders, aim deliberately at splitting the working class, the tactics of the united front will be of decisive import. for a whole epoch.”

All this is equally true today.

As to the “workers’ government,” we read the following in the resolution of the Fourth Congress:

“As a general agitational slogan, the workers’ government (or the workers’ and government) can be applied almost everywhere. But as an actual political slogan, the workers’ government is of greatest importance in those countries where the bourgeois state of society is particularly unstable, where the correlation of forces between the workers and the bourgeoisie puts on the order of the day the solution of the question of power as a practical necessity. In such countries the slogan of the workers’ government arises as the necessary deduction from the whole tactics of the united front.

“The parties of the Second and the Second and a Half Internationals are trying to save the situation in these countries by advocating and carrying out a coalition of the bourgeoisie with the Social-Democrats. The recent attempt of some parties of the Second International (for instance, in Germany) to decline open participation in such a coalition government, while at the same time carrying it out in a concealed form, was nothing else but a manoeuvre to allay the indignation of the masses—a mere tricky way of hoodwinking the masses. As against the bourgeois Social-Democratic coalition, open or covert, the Communists oppose the united front of all the toilers and the coalition of all the Labour parties in the economic, and political field for the struggle against the bourgeois power and for its ultimate overthrow. As a result of the united struggle of all the workers against the bourgeoisie,



the whole machinery of the State must go over into the hands of the workers' government, and by this very fact the rule and position of the working class will become consolidated.

"The fundamental tasks of the workers' government must be to arm the proletariat, to disarm the bourgeois counter-revolutionary organisations, to establish control over production, to shift the main burden of taxation to the possessing classes, and to break the resistance of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

"Such a workers' government is possible only if it comes as the result of the struggle of the masses themselves, and if it relies on the militant working class organs created by the rank and file of the enslaved masses of the toilers. But even a government that has come as a result of parliamentary grouping of forces, i.e., a government of pure parliamentary origin, may also lead to a revival of the revolutionary labour movement "(for instance, the present MacDonald Government). "Of course, the creation of a genuine Labour government, the further maintenance of such a government on the basis of revolutionary politics, is bound to lead to bitter strife, or even to civil war with the bourgeoisie. Already the very attempt of the proletariat to form such a workers' government will immediately meet with the strongest resistance on the part of the bourgeoisie. Hence the slogan of the workers' government is capable of consolidating the ranks of the proletariat and letting loose the revolutionary struggle.

"In certain cases the Communists must declare themselves ready to form a workers' government jointly with the non-Communist Labour parties and the workers' organisations. But this they can do only when there are guarantees that this workers' government will wage a fight against the bourgeoisie in the aforesaid sense. Under such circumstances, the necessary preliminary conditions for Communist participation in such a Government are as follows:

1. Participation in the workers' government is admissible only with the consent of the Communist. International.

2. The Communists who participate in such a government must be under the strictest control of their party.

3. The Communists who participate in such a workers' government must keep in the closest touch with the revolutionary organisations of the masses.

4. The Communist Party retains unconditionally its identity and its complete independence of agitation.

"With all its advantages, the slogan of the workers' government, as indeed the whole tactics of the united front, has also its dangers, and in order to avoid these dangers the communist parties must remember the following.

"Every bourgeois government is at the same time a capitalist government, but not every workers' government is a real proletarian government, i.e. a revolutionary weapon of proletarian power.

"The Communist International must take into consideration the following possibilities:

1, A liberal workers' government. Such a government existed in Australia; such a government may emerge in the near future in England.

2. A Social-Democratic workers' government (Germany).

3. A workers' and peasants' government. Such a possibility exists in the Balkans, in Czecho-Slovakia, etc.

4. A Workers' government with the participation of Communists.

5. A genuine proletarian workers' government, which in its pure form may be realised only by the Communist Party.

"The first two types are in reality far from revolutionary workers' governments, but masked coalition governments of the bourgeoisie and the anti-revolutionary Labour leaders. Such "workers' governments" are tolerated by the weakened bourgeoisie at critical moments, in order to mislead the

proletariat in regard to the real class nature of the State, or even in order to drive back the revolutionary onslaught of the proletariat and to gain time with the aid of the bribed Labour leaders. In such a government the Communists cannot participate. On the contrary, they must ruthlessly expose the real nature of these alleged workers' governments. At this period of capital decay, when the most important task is to attract the majority of the proletariat into the ranks of the fighters for the proletarian revolution, these governments may objectively contribute to the acceleration of the decay of bourgeois rule.

"The Communists are ready to join hands even with those workers who have not yet recognised the need for the proletarian dictatorship, with the Social-Democratic, Christian-Socialist, non-party, and syndicalist elements of the working class, and so on. Consequently, the Communists are ready on certain conditions and under, certain guarantees to support also a non-Communist workers' government. But under all conditions the Communists must openly declare to the workers that the proletarian dictatorship alone ensures the real emancipation of the working class. The next two types of workers' government, (3 and 4), in which the Communists may take part, do not yet mean the proletarian dictatorship; they are not even the necessary historical form of transition to the dictatorship, but. they may become an important starting point towards the establishment of the dictatorship. The complete proletarian dictatorship is only a real workers' government, (type 5), composed of Communists."

I now ask you: what Labour party in the world, except the Communist Party, could solve this elementary task of disarming the bourgeoisie, arming the proletariat, shifting the burden of taxation to the shoulders of the rich, and breaking the counter-revolutionary resistance of the bourgeoisie? All this can be accomplished by a real revolutionary government, led

only by the Communist Party.

Why have we expressed our ideas in this manner! Some comrades have criticised me for my alleged suggestion that we translated the slogan of “proletarian dictatorship” from the Latin into the Russian. As though I acted simply in the role of a translator. What I meant was a translation from the Latin into the popular, understandable revolutionary language that we should not be a sect, but a mass party.

Just read what Lenin writes in “Renegade Kautsky,” about the German events of 1918:

“Now there is no need to write about it, the words ‘proletarian dictatorship’ were translated from the Latin into the language of the revolution by the events themselves.”

It is not a question merely of making the slogan popular, but it means rather that we, as a mass party, must insist on transforming agitation into flesh and blood, this is what the translation of the Latin word into revolutionary language means. Otherwise we shall be Marxists of 1847, Marxists of the “Communist Manifesto,” but not Marxists of 1924.

We passed through a time when the Social-Democrats were in the majority, when we were accused of sowing discord in the Labour movement, when the whole of our strategy consisted of our efforts to demonstrate to the Social-Democratic workers the real state of affairs.

This morning I had to do a very tedious bit of work, to go over the speech which I made at the Fourth Congress. One could hardly imagine a more tedious job. Maybe you will find it equally tedious to listen again to what I said then. Nevertheless, I must quote rather extensively in order to dispel the legend about the revision of our tactics.

I said at the Fourth Congress:

“The slogan of workers’ government has not yet been made sufficiently clear. The tactics of the united front are

applicable in almost all the countries of the world. It would be difficult to find a country having a numerous proletariat, in which the tactics of the united front would be out of place. These tactics are equally applicable in America, Bulgaria, Italy and Germany. The way circumstances have shaped themselves at the present time, these tactics are of universal importance. But this cannot be said of the slogan of the workers' government. This slogan can under no circumstances acquire such universal importance. It has only a limited importance. It may be advanced only in such countries in which the problem of power, the problem of government, takes place both in parliament and outside of parliament. One may no doubt carry on some effective propaganda in America to-day with the aid of this slogan, by saying to the American workers: If you wish to be free, you must capture power. *But from this it does not follow* that under the existing correlation of existing forces in America the slogan of the workers' government could arouse such intense agitational interest as it would for instance, in Czecho-Slovakia, or in Germany, or as it happened and may occur again, in Italy. The slogan of the workers' government is not such a universal slogan as the tactics of the united front. The slogan of the workers' government represents a certain concrete form of the application of the tactics of the united front under given conditions. On this basis it is easy to fall into error. It seems to me, comrades, that we must combat the attempts to represent the workers' government as an absolute necessity, in the sense that we must inevitably pass through the stage of the "workers' government (i.e., the "workers' government" of a transitional nature, not the revolutionary workers' government) may become a real fact only in exceptional cases, only under quite completely peculiar circumstances in one country or another. Thus, the "workers' government" (of transitional nature) will be rather the exception. Furthermore, we must not entertain the idea that we

are going to enjoy a period of semi-peaceful development, thanks to the workers' government which will make easier for us the burden of the struggle. If a workers' government will be based exclusively on parliamentary position, which are of no real worth, it will represent but a small episode in the struggle, and will be unable to prevent the civil war: This should not mean that under existing circumstances the slogan of the workers' government is unacceptable.

"Of course, the tactics of the united front contain also some dangers, which are indicated by the Executive in the December theses. But the greatest danger is to interpret them as a form of workers' government. For in countries with parliamentary provision, as for instance, in France, this question is interpreted as though we as Marxists do not speak of the proletarian dictatorship, but of something else. But we understand this slogan exclusively as the application of the proletarian dictatorship. Even if a workers' government is formed, we shall not escape the civil war. In some cases the former will even lend poignancy to the latter."

I think this ought to be quite clear, comrades.

At the Fourth Congress I quoted from a speech by the Czech Foreign Minister. Benesh, who said a kind word about the Communists. Benesh said:

"Communists cannot be denied the art of imagery. They know how to serve to the working class the same thing under different guises. For instance, there was a time when the Communists agitated for the formation of Soviets. When this agitation failed to yield the anticipated results, they stopped it in order to renew it again six months later in the shape of an agitation for the formation of united front committees."

I said: Bravo, Benesh! It seems that you have understood better than some of the opportunist Labour leaders of Czecho-Slovakia the real substance of the case.

I may again be reproached with divulging a "political"

secret. But you see that already in 1922 the substance of the case was understood by Benesh.” How could comrades Kriebich and Smeral forget this “secret” which was known to Benesh already in 1922, namely that this slogan serves us only as formula for approaching the masses. This I said quite plainly at the Fourth Congress:

“I believe that our discussion at this Congress, particularly after the work of the committee, will not lead us to a rejection of the slogan of “workers’ government.” The slogan remains correct, if we consider it as a means of approaching the masses. There can be no dispute about this. All we have to do is to make proper use of it. It contains the very same dangers as the tactics of the united front. When we begin talking about governments, the idea suggests itself quite naturally about parliamentary combinations, distribution of portfolios, and so on. Here we encounter greater difficulties than in the tactics of the united front. But from this it does not follow that we must give up this slogan because it is difficult of realisation, as it was surmised by our French comrades.”

Can there be anything clearer than that, Comrade Radek!

Furthermore, comrades, in my concluding speech at the Fourth Congress, I said:

“Therefore, I think, comrades, that we may quietly follow the slogan of “workers’ government,” but on condition that we distinctly understand what we are talking about. Woe betide us if we should in our agitation for one moment entertain the opinion that the realisation of a workers’ government is inevitable, that it is possible in a peaceful way, that it will mean the inauguration of a period of semi-organic development, which can take the place of civil war, and so on. If such views exist among us, (and there are perhaps some who maintain them), we must categorically combat them and educate the working class to the consciousness that in order to form a

workers' government we must first of all overthrow and vanquish the bourgeoisie."

This is what the slogan really means: You want a workers' government? Allright! For the sake of this we are prepared to enter into negotiations even with the Social-Democrats. Although we say that they will betray us, we are nevertheless the adherents of a workers' government, even with their participation, providing only that this government shall show its readiness to fight hand in hand with us against the bourgeoisie. We shall enter into the fight, and if the fight will lead to the formation of a workers' government, then it will stand on a firm foundation, and it will really be the beginning of the proletarian dictatorship. I do not insist on the word "pseudonym," I gladly make a present of it to Comrade Meyer. My only concern is that we take a definite line upon this question. The workers government is by no means a military trick undertaken in order to outwit God and the bourgeoisie and to prevent civil war. The International must be a good strategist, but there is no strategy in nature to make it possible to avoid civil war, and to arrive at a workers' government over a polished floor. The decisive moment is the fight and victory over the bourgeoisie. And once we overcome the bourgeoisie, we shall be able to proceed to the various forms of a workers' government.

The Labour Government in England under the present circumstances may objectively act as a revolutionary factor, and in that country we will even support a limited menshevik-liberal workers' government. We know that under certain conditions such a Menshevik-liberal workers' government may turn against us with far greater ferocity than even a bourgeois government. This was splendidly demonstrated by Nosko and by our own mensheviks. Consequently, such a government by no means implies the possible avoidance at civil war. Therefore, I think that the slogan of workers' government is



absolutely correct as an agitational slogan, if we shall only know how to make revolutionary use of it...

On this question we must shun circumlocution. We must say: comrades, a workers' government is a splendid thing, but in order to form it we must first of all overthrow the bourgeoisie, and in order to do this we must have arms, we must organise, we must win over the majority of the working class. And above all, we must clearly understand that it will come to serious fights, that there is no other way to victory. I believe, comrades, that at this I may conclude this part of my concluding speech.

This was the main substance of my speech. I said then that some people are inclined to consider the question of power as a sort of "no man's land." The fact of the matter is that in order to form a workers' government we must first of all vanquish the bourgeoisie, which now holds the power. Do you really imagine that everything will run smoothly, that the bourgeoisie will turn round and say: "Splendid! You have devised a new formula, and, therefore, we shall hand over power to you." No, comrades, in order to organise the workers' government we must first of all vanquish the bourgeoisie. This "little detail" should not be forgotten.

In regard to the other organisations, I said the following in my speech:

"At a distance it seemed to us that our Party (in Germany) was cringing too much before the chiefs of other organisations. In Germany we are not poor relatives, but an independent party, which will ultimately be the victor. At a moment when the Social-Democrats wanted to get us in at all costs, at such moment it least of all behoved us to play the part of poor relatives."

I beg to be excused for quoting so extensively from my own speech. But I saw no better way of exposing the "invention" of Radek and of the whole right that we were now

engaged in liquidating the tactics of the Fourth Congress.

If you will read my speech, I believe you will say even now that it was not a bad speech. In it the idea was expressed quite plainly that the slogan of “workers’ government” is merely an agitational slogan. It is only a gesture towards the proletarian dictatorship, towards the winning of the masses for the idea of dictatorship. How can it be now asserted that a revision is being effected! No, comrades, this is merely used by Radek as an “agitational slogan” against the Communist International, nothing more than that.

They say: every book has its fate. Also every slogan has its fate, and many an experienced revolutionist may be taken in.

This morning I did yet another job: I read over the speeches and resolutions of the Enlarged Executive of June, 1923, which dealt with the slogan of “workers’ and peasants’ governments.” In my speech on the question of the tactics of the united front (I must again quote myself) I said the following:

“What then is the real meaning of the tactics of the united front? Is it only a tactical manoeuvre, or does it indicate a sincere desire for a union with the Social-Democratic workers? To this question we in our turn reply with the following question: I ask you, comrades, whether in the early years of the activity of the Communist International, in 1919-1920, there was anyone among us who did not strive in the sincerest manner towards a rapprochement; and even fraternisation with the Social-Democratic workers. I think that no such people were among us. From the very first day of the existence of the Communist International, were all of us in favour of rapprochement with the Social-Democratic and even with the non-party workers.”

I will now ask you: What about the tactics of the united front: did we carry them out in 1919-1920? No, we did not.

Thus, if you take the first period of the existence of the Communist International, say until the Second Congress inclusive, you will find that the situation was like this: rapprochement and fraternisation with the Social-Democratic workers—yes; tactics of the united front—no.

Now then, what do the tactics of the united front consist of? What was the new thing that we started, say in the beginning of 1921, which we formulated in 1922, and which we did our utmost to carry out in 1923? What was the new thing that we introduced? It was the very thing that we described as a strategical manoeuvre. Here we must first of all deal with the problem of “masses and leaders.”

We must, however, give ourselves a clear account of the relations between the slogan of “workers’ and peasants’ government” and our old formula of proletarian dictatorship.” Comrades are sure to be found in our midst who will ask in perplexity: If we advance the slogan of workers’ and peasants’ government, does it not mean that we give up our formula of proletarian dictatorship? Do we remain a party of the workers’ or do we become a workers’ and peasants’ party?

He who has learned anything at all about the tactics of the united front, he who is beginning to understand the meaning of political class strategy of the proletariat, must understand that the slogan of “workers’ and peasants’ government is “the way towards the proletarian dictatorship, not the negation of the proletarian dictatorship.

Thus, in advancing the slogan of “workers and peasants’ government,” we by no means renounce the proletarian dictatorship. In this we cannot yield a single step because there is no other way than the proletarian dictatorship to liberate the human race from the yoke of capitalism, and there can be no other way. The working class is the only class which is revolutionary all the way through. But this class and its Party may act wisely or foolishly. If our class will act wisely, we

shall reach our goal much sooner and with the least sacrifices. We shall then be able to partly neutralise and partly gain over to our side a considerable part of the peasantry and of the petty-bourgeoisie in general. If we shall act unwisely, if we shall interpret the great emancipatory task of the proletariat in a narrow sense, we shall thereby cut off the moment of ultimate victory.

Therefore, we think that the time has come to generalise the slogan of “workers and peasants’ government. ... The dangers connected with the slogan of “workers and peasants’ government” consist in the fact that some of our weaker sections, which have been little trained in the Marxian spirit, may begin to interpret it in the sense of the doctrine of the Left-wing social-revolutionaries. You all remember what the Russian social-revolutionary party was like. This party claimed to represent the workers, the peasants, and the intellectuals.

The dangers arising out of the launching of the slogan of “workers’ and peasants’ government” consist in the fact that our weaker parties may perhaps begin to befooled by the clan nature of our party. Preventive measures must be taken right now.

We must show the way to freedom from the yoke of capitalism to all those elements of the population which are not directly interested in the capitalist domination.

Thus, we must not close our eyes for a single moment to the dangers associated with the launching of the slogan of “workers’ and peasants’ government. People who are afraid of wolves should not walk into the forests. We have already managed to acquire some knack in tackling the difficulties of manoeuvring tactics... We are now confronted with a much loftier task: we must imbue our parties with the desire for power, we must raise them into parties, which shall be conscious at every stop of their activity that to-morrow they will be victorious over the bourgeoisie. Our Party represents the vanguard of the working class. Once imbued with the

desire for power, this vanguard will communicate the same desire to the teeming millions of the working class. And when the scores of millions of the proletariat will be imbued with the desire for power, it will not be at all so difficult to attain the victory.

Comrades, it is asserted by Radek, Zetkin and Kreibich that the workers' government means the coalition of "all Labour parties." If this be so, then would not the workers' and peasants' government mean the coalition of all workers' and peasants' parties?

To put the question in this manner is to demonstrate how false and un-Marxian it is. How can it be asserted that the workers' and peasants' government is based on a coalition with the workers' and peasants' parties, if we know that in the whole wide world there is not a single peasant party that is really revolutionary?

Comrade Radek and others, by stating the question in this manner, you show plainly that you are on the wrong track at best. Read at least the resolution on workers' and peasants' government which I drew and which I defended.

In that resolution we read:

"The slogan of 'workers' and peasants' government,' as the old slogan of workers' government, by no means takes the place of, or shifts into the background, our agitation for the proletarian dictatorship, which is the corner-stone of Communist tactics. On the contrary, the slogan of 'workers' and peasants' government,' extending as it does the basis for carrying out the tactics of the united front in the only proper way for the present epoch, is the way to the proletarian dictatorship. Correct interpretation of the slogan of 'workers' and peasants' government' will enable the Communists not only to mobilise the proletarian masses in the towns, but also to establish for themselves reliable points of support in the villages and thus pave the way for the conquest of power."

“The slogan of ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ will prove of good service to the Communist parties also on the day after the conquest of power by the proletariat. For this slogan will remind the proletariat of the necessity to check its advance by the state of feeling among the peasantry in the country, to establish proper co-ordination between the victorious proletariat and the peasantry, and to observe sweet reasonableness in carrying out the economic measures of the proletariat, as it has been achieved by the victorious proletariat of Russia in that epoch of the Russian revolution which is known as ‘The New Economic Policy.’

“Of course, the agitation under the slogan of ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ must be concretely adapted to the circumstance of every particular country. For instance, in America, it must deal with the problems of the toiling farmers. The defence of the economic interests of the peasantry in the spirit of the programme of the Communist International must be the starting point of our entire agitation for the workers’ and peasants’ government.”

I believe that this quotation should prove to you sufficiently convincing. After the conquest of power, the slogan of the workers’ and peasants’ government will still retain its usefulness, in the sense in which it continues to be useful in the U.S.S.R., where we have a proletarian dictatorship, but a wise dictatorship, which carries out a policy that is acceptable to the peasants. Otherwise the whole dictatorship would have gone to the devil. And this we must be able to point out to the peasantry. For this we need the slogan of “workers’ and peasants’ government.”

Thus this slogan will retain its propagandist value even after the conquest of power. How much more so before the conquest? But it will never become transformed into the slogan of “coalition of all workers’ and peasants’ parties.”

Permit me to claim your attention for a few more

quotations from that resolution:

“The very fact that the Communist Parties will assimilate and start an international agitation for the slogan of the ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ will lay the foundation for the neutralisation of the middle classes of the peasantry, and for the winning over to our side of the small peasantry.

“The Executive of the Communist International observed that the great majority of our sections have so far displayed extreme indifference to propaganda work in the villages, and this is highly detrimental to the cause. This indifference betrayed, in the first place, the persistence of the and legacy of the Second International out of whose ranks the more important parties of the Communist International were born; secondly, it shows a wrong theoretical attitude on the question of the peasantry, which tries to argue as though from the standpoint of ‘orthodox Marxism’ that the workers’ party has nothing to do with the peasantry; thirdly, it indicates a narrow guild conception of the class struggle of the proletariat. The task of the Communist Parties at the present moment consists in doing away once and for all with such a narrow guild standpoint. The Communist Parties should not consider themselves as merely the parties of the extreme proletarian opposition within the bourgeois order of society, as it was done in the years when the Second International was in its prime. The Communist Parties should now be fortified with the psychology of parties which expect in the near future to lead the working masses into the fight against the bourgeois order, to overthrow the bourgeoisie and to take its place at the helm of the State. The narrow guild psychology must be substituted by the psychology of parties which have the desire for power and which embody the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution. The

Communist Parties must be prepared to vanquish the bourgeoisie to-morrow, and, therefore, even to-day they must set themselves aims which embrace the whole of the people, thus endeavouring to secure the support to the proletariat from the elements of the population which, on account of their social position, may render support to the proletariat in one way or another at the decisive moment.

“As a propagandist slogan, enabling us to express by arithmetical formulas what was formerly expressed only algebraically, the slogan ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ may have a universal meaning. As a slogan of the actual political struggle, the watchword ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ will have the greatest significance especially in such countries as France, Germany, Italy, the Balkans, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Finland, etc. In any case, the victory of “the proletarian revolution and its consolidation would nowhere be possible without support in some form or other from the peasants. And in this sense the slogan ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ must be a general slogan of the Communist Party. Thus, while launching with all our energy the slogan of ‘workers’ and peasants’ government,’ the Executive of the Comintern recommends to the Communist Parties that they do not forget the dangers involved in its incorrect application. Just as in the case of the united front policy in general, the use of the slogans ‘workers’ government’ and ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ is undoubtedly fraught with great political dangers in those cases where our party is not able to apply them in a revolutionary Marxist spirit. The most obvious dangers connected with the slogan ‘workers’ and peasants’ government’ are as follows:

“(1) In the parties which have not passed through a sufficiently rigid Marxist school, the danger arises of interpreting this slogan, in the spirit of the Russian Social



Revolutionaries, in the spirit of petty bourgeois ‘Socialism’ which regards the whole peasantry as one solid mass, closing their eyes to the fact that different classes exist among the peasantry themselves.

“(2) The second danger consists in the fact that Communists with insufficient political training may endeavour to replace mass revolutionary work among the masses of working peasants by drawing the peasants into unprincipled parliamentary combinations with the so-called representatives of the peasant parties, who are often among the most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie. While fully cognisant of these and similar dangers connected with the application of the slogan ‘workers’ and peasants’ government,’ the Communist Party cannot, however, reject these pro-eminentely strategical tactics and must learn to combine the tactics of penetrating into the masses of the workers with the steady, indefatigable, and persistent defence of the principles of revolutionary Marxism.

“It goes without saying that penetration into the masses of the peasantry and the slogan ‘workers’ and peasants’ government,’ by no means presupposes the transformation of our party into ‘Trudoviki’—a workers’ and peasants’ party. Our party must remain the party of the working class, but a working class which carries with it all sections of the workers, and leads them into the struggle against capital.”

It seems to me that these extracts are sufficient proof of the fact that many unreliable Communists—as we of course expected—did not understand the essence of the matter. It even happened that in certain respects even Comrade Zetkin, one of the most trustworthy and foremost fighters in the Communist International, failed to understand it. Permit me to quote still another phase from the speech which Comrade Zetkin made, yesterday evening. She said:

“In regard to the question of the workers’ and peasants’ government, it must be understood that I am entirely unable to agree with the statement of Comrade Zinoviev that the workers’ and peasants’ government is merely a pseudonym or a synonym or any other kind of ‘nym’ for the dictatorship of the proletariat.”

“It may be so in Russia, but for countries that have attained a higher degree of capitalistic development, this interpretation will not do.

“In such countries the workers’ and peasants’ government is the expression of a definite, concrete, historical period when the bourgeoisie can no longer retain power in their hands, and the proletariat are not yet sufficiently strong to take over full power.”

It seems to me, comrades, that for such words even Comrade Radek would not thank Comrade Zetkin. This is too much even for the Right to swallow. What, pray, means the phrase: “For Russia it may be true, but for other countries it won’t do?”

Comrades, this is nothing else than a resurrection of some of Levi’s ideas. And Levi built up a very persuasive theory indeed. He said:

“Glory and honour to the Russian revolution; it has overthrown Czarism, but just the same the Russian revolution is merely a peasant revolution in a backward country.”

“In our Western European countries entirely different tactics must be pursued. We can do nothing without the Social-Democratic workers. We must work more closely with the Social-Democratic workers.”

Whence the theory of the coalition of all labour parties. I do not wish, of course, to state that Comrade Zetkin is a supporter of Levi. But there was a familiar note in her words.

If Comrade Clara wished to say that before the victory of

the proletarian revolution there were bound to be “Labour” governments in Europe of the MacDonald or Scheidemann type—that is certainly true. But what does that mean? Is this then the kind of “workers’ government” which we are demanding in our slogan? These “Labour governments” are merely by-products of the struggle of the working class for the proletarian revolution. Objectively the MacDonald “Labour” government represents historical progress, just as capitalism is historical progress in comparison with feudalism and bourgeois democracy by comparison with Black Hundred monarchy. But we are striving for something entirely different—a real workers’ government. This will never be attained through a coalition of “all Labour parties.”

Undoubtedly in highly developed capitalist countries it will be necessary to act somewhat differently than in Russia. The forms of agitation cannot merely be transferred mechanically to other countries. I will have more to say on this later. But in the fundamental question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and in the slogan of the workers’ and peasants’ government as a “pseudonym” —as a means of transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat— what difference is there here between Germany and Russia, or for that matter between America and Germany?

In Germany, as in Russia, there are peasants—in Germany as in Russia, there are workers. In order to find the road to a mass party, in order actually to influence the course of revolution—in order to do all this we make use of the term “workers’ and peasants’ government.”

Here in Russia, when the mensheviks and, the S.R.’s were in the majority in the Soviets, we launched the slogan “All power to the Soviets.” At the time this slogan was the best kind of magnet. Probably the time will also come in Germany for the launching of such a slogan. However, it is possible that this slogan will then be couched in other terms. The slogan,

“workers’ and peasants’ government” met the requirements of our transition period completely. We say to the Social-Democratic workers: “We are ready to enter into a government which will accept our most elementary conditions —the disarming of the bourgeoisie, and the arming of the working class. All militant workers must understand this, as otherwise they will simply be shot themselves. Herein is contained the art of proper approach to the masses. We must win them over and direct them if we wish to be victorious.

Radek and Kreibich to a certain extent have endeavoured to give the impression that we were formulating new tactics for the Western European countries, differing from the tactics in the Russian Revolution. Radek asked, supposing that this question would be a very ticklish one for us, “Very well”, does that mean that you will never participate in the same government with the Social-Democrats? Just let Zinoviev answer that question.” Radek thought that was a very ticklish question which we would not be able to answer. We might answer that there’s no use dividing the bear’s skin before you’ve killed the bear. But in general we find ourselves in the period of struggle for power. Therefore, all such questions are entirely in place. It seems to me that the point at issue is not our participation in a government together with Social-Democrats, but that we here have two opposing political systems. Permit me again to remind you of the experience of the Russian revolution. And not only because we love the Russian revolution, as we all do, but because it is our richest source of experience. After the victory of the German revolution the latter will undoubtedly be a still greater source of experience, until that time the Russian revolution remains unexcelled in this respect. Bukharin has already reminded you that we had a government in which the Left S.R.’s, who at that time represented part of the workers and peasants, took part. Comrades, might it not be possible that in Germany the

Communist government would include part of the social-democracy? In my opinion, this might happen. Who were the Left S.R's? They were a part of the Social Revolutionary Party who had split off from the main group, and at a certain historic moment, gave us their support under the pressure of revolutionary events.

In fact, they behaved at the time as if they were further "Left" than even the Communists, and had considerable influence over part of the working class and the peasants. We took them in tow, made use of them, and then the best of them came over to us, after having learnt the lessons of the revolution; the rest went over to the camp of the counter-revolutionaries as was to be expected of infuriated petty-bourgeois.

Last year, during the October days in Germany, I was told that among the Social-Democrats there were people who at the proper time would come over to us. If I am not mistaken there were among these people a certain Aufenhaus (protests from the German delegation). I do not know him—it is quite possible that the mention of his name may be inopportune. But I was told that at the decisive moment he would be likely to leave the Social-Democrats, and fight on our side. The name does not matter, I merely need an example. I repeat, I do not know either Aufenhaus nor his aunt. But I know for a certainty that at the decisive moment a certain section of the Social-Democratic workers will come over to our side, that at that moment certain leaders will rise to the surface who express the temper of that section of the Social-Democrats. The question arises, should we then draw into the government that section splitting away from the disintegrating Social-Democracy, and representing a portion of the militant workers? Certainly, no one would oppose this. Such cases have already occurred.

Comrades, this is one political system. Another system is the following: And here we have the experience of the Russian

revolution to guide us. When Kerensky's government had already experienced a severe setback, i.e., in September, 1917, when the mensheviks were singing their swansong, they launched the slogan of a "Socialist ministry." What pray, may that be! What they actually had in view was a government of S.R.'s, mensheviks, trudovici, and other bourgeois-democratic intelligentsia—peasant groups, with a mixture of bolsheviks thrown in. Such a government is by no means "uniform." It included Communists, fighting for revolution. Mensheviks fighting against revolution, and S.R.'s who were also against revolution. But the mensheviks and the S.R.'s defended this hotch-potch under the slogan "Socialist ministry." They applied the term "Socialist" to a government in which there was neither uniformity nor Socialism.

What impelled them to do this? Our enemies at that time also saw a convenient formula with which to address the masses, a "pseudonym" for their policy. The slogan "Socialist government" was for the mensheviks a pseudonym for their "democratic," that is to say, their "bourgeois" policy. Why did they choose that particular slogan? Because the Socialist idea enjoyed great popularity, because there was at that time an almost universal tendency towards Socialism.

I have cited a historical example for you. There was a time when the mensheviks also sought and found for themselves a pseudonym in the above-mentioned euphonious slogan. The simple workers then said to themselves: "Aha, a Socialist government—an excellent thing. Why should we not vote for it?" Particularly if it might be obtained without civil war.

I remember how the workers from the Putilov works in Petrograd, that strongest bulwark of Bolshevism, sent to us a delegation composed of Bolshevik and non-party workers, who said to us:

"Of course, comrades, a coalition government with the bourgeoisie cannot be allowed. We are ready to fight to the last

drop of blood against such a government. But what objection could there be to a Socialist ministry? At that time we had to explain that this was nothing but a pseudonym for bourgeois democracy.

And so, comrades, as you see, the matter is not so simple.

There are two political systems. If Radek asks me: Does that mean that the Social-Democrats can never participate in the same government with us?" then I answer "The Left S.R.'s—debris from the sinking S.R.—took part in our government. Fragments of the foundering ship of Social-Democracy—fragments representing the revolutionary section of the Social-Democratic workers, might share in our government even now. But what Comrade Radek wants is so entirely different a kind of politics, reminiscent of the 'Socialist' ministry, or a coalition of all workers' parties."

Certainly, I know very well that the mensheviks wanted to dupe the masses, while Comrade Radek wants to serve them no less than the rest of us, but we are concerned not with subjective intentions, but with the objective consequences of certain definite viewpoints.

Why, Comrade Radek, do you ask in such a typically journalistic and sensational spirit: "And so then, not a single Social-Democrat may enter a Communist government?"

You have a way of shaking your finger at the sky. Certainly that Social-Democrats may enter our government. Why not! Comrade Radek has quoted my remark about the Christian Socialists. True, I did defend the viewpoint that it is necessary to say to the working class: "We are ready to go hand in hand with all workers, even with the "Christian Socialists," but only on one simple condition—the disarming of the bourgeoisie, the arming of the working class, etc." Radek was under the impression that he was dealing me a knockout blow in quoting my words regarding my readiness to enter into an agreement with the "Christian Socialists." Here a

certain French proverb to the effect that he who proves too much proves nothing at all, would be very appropriate. My readiness to unite with the Christian Socialist workers on the conditions indicated, is nothing but a means of reaching the masses with an agitational slogan. This is simply a slogan for agitation, and scheme for coalition with all so-called workers' parties. Thus Radek has demonstrated that his view point is fundamentally very dangerous for the Comintern.

This, comrades, is all that I care to say on the question of the workers' and peasants' government and the so-called revision of our tactics.

### **The Czech Comrades and Their Diplomacy**

Now I will deal with the Czech comrades. They read two declarations both drawn up in letter form and very carefully formulated. One was read by Comrade Smeral, the other by Comrade Kreibich. Comrade Smeral declared that the delegation was substantially in agreement with our political viewpoint on the workers' government. Kreibich declared just the contrary—that in the resolution or the Fourth Congress mention was made of a coalition of all workers' parties, etc.

Smeral expressed himself very cautiously. Smeral likes to take the attitude of allowing the other fellow to criticise the Comintern, sharply, and then jumping in to save the situation, declaring his solidarity with the Comintern, etc. The political responsibility for the opportunistic tendencies of the Czech Communist Party, rests, I repeat, mainly with Comrade Smeral, as political leader of the party. And, therefore, we must come to an entirely straightforward understanding with him. Smeral has his good points. When it is necessary to win over to our side the masses of the proletariat, to split the masses away from the Social-Democrats, Smeral has no peer. He knows the



country, he knows the proletariat. In the formulas of the Third and Fourth World Congress regarding the winning over of the proletariat, no change need be made. We might only add that we do not need a majority for the sake of a majority as such—but for the revolutionary struggle. This is the most important thing to be remembered in Czecho-Slovakia at the present time. We have no intention of provoking a crisis in the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party. We know its strong sides. Its composition is excellent, it is a proletarian party. We know that it contains splendid human material, and that the workers in its ranks are good fighters. The party already has important attainments to its credit. It was very successful in winning the majority from the Social-Democrats. But this is no time to shower one another with diplomatic compliments. Certain people in the Czecho-Slovak party must be corrected. I am in entire agreement with what Ruth Fischer has said in regard to Smeral's declaration. Why should we indulge in these diplomatic declarations at our Congress! This is not a bourgeois parliament, here one must speak only, at times even sharply, even in criticism of the Executive. There is nothing wrong in that. We cannot, limit ourselves to paper declarations alone. In my opinion, the Czecho-Slovakian party must correct those things that need correction, avoiding a profound upheaval or crisis. And this may be avoided if the leading comrades in the party desire it.

The minority of the Czecho-Slovak delegation, who have expressed themselves on the floor of the Congress against the opportunism of Smeral and Kreibich, receive our full support: Let Smeral himself make haste to correct his policy and no internal struggle will be necessary.

Comrade Bukharin argued against one of Comrade Kreibich's articles. Comrade Kreibich supposes that the conclusions, deductions and decisions of the Comintern are based entirely on theses, articles and quotations; he was of the

same opinion formerly, when he was with the left. And I say, why should we not form our opinions on the basis of articles, quotations and resolutions? Certainly, not only on the basis of such things, but undoubtedly theses, quotations and articles give sufficient basis for opinion. And, therefore, it seems to me that Comrade Kreibich would act correctly if he would not persist in his Right mistakes, just as formerly he did not persist in his Left mistakes. In the full flower of his "Leftism" he jumped too far to the Left. Now, for the sake of maintaining equilibrium he has jumped just as far as in the other direction. His spiritual preceptor at that time was Lenin, who gave him a thorough whipping. Unfortunately that is not possible now. I have heard many comrades say: "Yes, Lenin used to whip me sometimes, but it was really a pleasure to be whipped by Lenin," —I am in full agreement with that opinion, even whipping is pleasant when administered by a master. But what are we to do in the absence of Lenin? The Executive must now collectively replace Lenin. And the Executive is ready to whip Comrade Kreibich collectively (exclamations of approval), it will collectively intercede with Comrade Kreibich to repudiate his Right mistakes, as formerly he repudiated his Left mistakes.

Further, Comrade Kreibich declares: "Lenin in his time did not permit Comrade Smeral to be called a Centrist in the resolution of the Congress." He emphasised the word centrist. Very well. But in what resolution are we now calling Smeral a Centrist? We are not concerned with bringing about a crisis in the Czecho-Slovakian Party. We love the Czech Party and consider it at least a sound proletarian party. But we do not shut our eyes to the weakness of its leaders and beg them to have done with these parliamentary declarations and to correct these things which need correction.

### **Comrade Hoeglund Must Acknowledge His Mistake.**

I should like to say a few words with regard to Comrade Hoeglund. Every time I converse with him or listen to him on the tribune, I say to myself: what a wise fellow. How much he might be able to give not only to a little country like Sweden, but to the Comintern as a whole, if only he would give up his illusions: Possessing as he does such rare qualities, why should he defend such a clearly mistaken policy, entirely indefensible from the point of view of Communism? Just as before he defended Lian and Tranmael, he now quarrels with the splendid Communist elements in the ranks of his own party on questions concerning prestige —and his own opportunistic mistakes. He does not wish to acknowledge that he has made mistakes. We have all made very grave blunders. It's a shameful thing if we have not the courage to acknowledge our own mistakes. Comrade Hoeglund's speech was very skilfully prepared, and was full of clever material, but there was lacking the vital spark, and that which we need most of all, an acknowledgement of his mistakes.

### **Comrade Bordiga's Errors.**

During part of his speech, Comrade Bordiga behaved like a diplomat, a role that does not suit him at all. I think that he behaved yesterday like a diplomat for the first time in his life. Let us hope it will be the last. Take the question of fractions. I reminded him that he said that a left fraction was essential for the Communist International. Comrade Bordiga denied that he ever said these words and pointed out that he promised to form a fraction only in case the International moves to the right or becomes reformist in character. I give my word to Comrade Bordiga publicly, that if the International ever becomes

reformist, I myself will form a left fraction. (Applause.)

Comrade Bordiga asks, who will give guarantees that the International will not change into a reformist International? The question is ridiculous. Where is the foundation for such a question?

Comrade Bordiga knows that we formed a left wing and carried on a fight inside the Second International at Zimmerwald, and consequently if such a thin were to happen, he can be quite calm on that score. However, I think it will not happen. I heard Comrade Bordiga's statement that he denies the words ascribed to him. But to-day I happened to come across an article written by Comrade Bordiga on the 5th of May, in which he says: "The question of fractions will only disappear from the scene when we approach the organisational forms mentioned above (individual action, rejection of amalgamation, etc.). If we do not follow this, the existence of a left opposition fraction will be essential in the International."

Consequently, this will be necessary not when we become opportunists and reformists, but when we do not share Comrade Bordiga's point of view on some minor, incidental questions, for example, if we do not agree that it is impossible to amalgamate with other parties or form our nuclei within other parties. This is sufficient ground for him to form a fraction.

We accept the challenge. When Comrade Bordiga threatens the International that he will form a fraction because of some minor organisational differences, I ask, "Who is the real Bordiga? He whom we find in reading his article written on the 5th of May, or he whom we heard in this hall on the 25th June?" (Applause.)

Now we come to the three questions that have the greatest importance for Comrade Bordiga. In the first place, he says that he considers any amalgamation of a Communist party with any other party inadmissible on principle. Secondly, he

opposes the formation of our nuclei in other parties and thirdly, he is against admitting sympathetic parties into the International.

Let us analyse these questions seriously. What reasons can be brought against our amalgamation with other parties that were not Communist previously, but became so after? I remind you that the union of the Spartacus Bund with the left independents after Halle was an amalgamation. Was this profitable for the International and the German Party? Yes, I say. It is true, it created a series of crises, but at the same time it formed a powerful, mass Communist party. The only Labour party in Germany, the Social-Democrats, were deprived of their monopoly in Halle.

Take, for example, such a small country as Belgium. We had a wry small Communist party there. It amalgamated with the left wing of the Social-Democratic party and formed a Communist party. Was this move correct? In my opinion it was.

What was the class of these phenomena? Comrade Bordiga reasons abstractly. We must never forget that in part we have our origin in the Second International. The Second International was founded thirty years before us. The Communist parties are being formed out of the rising generation and out of the better part that is leaving the Second International. It is not, as the "consistent" Comrade Bordiga thinks, because we were "eclectics" that this is taking place. Why should we argue against what has already taken place in Halle and in Belgium, and what will take place in Italy tomorrow with the better part of the previous Socialist Party? In my opinion Comrade Bordiga is quite wrong on this serious point.

His second proposition is that no Communist nuclei should ever be formed in other parties. Why not, I ask. Take a classical example: the British Labour Party. We decide that the

British Communist Party should penetrate into the Labour Party. It did this with success. Nobody at the present time would demand that they should leave the Labour Party. Does Comrade Bordiga consider this incorrect? The position in England is peculiar. There is a powerful party affiliated to the Second International there. The masses in this organisation are responsive to our agitation. The Labour Party itself is a peculiar organisation. We must penetrate into these masses, so as to bring them to the side of the Communists. What is it that causes Comrade Bordiga to be against this in "principle"? Is his reason that he considers the application of these tactics in Italy incorrect? No, does he say? If this is the case, then it is still more incomprehensible. We must bind our British comrades to remain in the Labour Party and energetically continue to form our nuclei.

The third question concerning sympathetic parties. I know of three cases. The "German Communist Labour Party," the American and Finnish Workers' Parties entered and partly enter at present time as sympathetic parties. Now the question is whether we shall admit part of the Italian Socialist Party to the Communist International as a sympathetic Party. Were we right to admit syndicalist elements into our International? Yes, we were. It was necessary to educate these masses and in this way gain the real revolutionary elements on our side. This was the state of affairs with the German Communist Labour Party. When this work was done, the better elements of the workers joined our party while the leaders showed their non-revolutionary character. A split took place and this very fact proves once again that our methods were correct.

Why is Comrade so stubborn? He is wrong in all three cases. He states that if we do not concede him these three points he will form a fraction. Comrades, I am not speaking here what the International or Comrade Bordiga ordered. I know that Comrade Bordiga is just as devoted a soldier of the

revolution as all of us. I said that Comrade Bordiga was our friend, but the International is a greater. In other words Comrade Bordiga must do what the International orders and not the reverse. "Und der König absolut wenn er unsern Willen tut" (The king is absolute when he obeys our will), reasons Comrade Bordiga. (Applause). All tributes to the International, but only when it obeys Comrade Bordiga's commands. I cannot understand how he can be so stubborn, he whom we knew as an excellent comrade who has done great service for the Italian movement. Italy is a beautiful sunny country, with many excellent proletarians; Mussolini will be smashed, but at the same time Italy is only a small corner from the point of the world revolution. You could have convinced yourself of the falsity of your views from the examples of Germany, England and America where our method of amalgamation is applied with such good results. You must remember that the countries just mentioned are of the greatest importance for our international movement. Why do you persist in delusions, Comrade Bordiga?

The question of the united front is of still greater importance. Comrade Bordiga tried to be amusing. "Well," he said, "if the words 'workers' government,' are the stumbling block, then we are willing to make this concession." On this question, Bordiga and Radek are the same. "The tactics accepted at the Fourth Congress are being revised," they say. This sort of thing does happen when we have "ultra-left" and "ultra-right" tendencies; they often coincide in their opinions.

Well, Comrade Bordiga recollects the enlarged plenum of February, 1922. How were the parts distributed at that time? I spoke on the question of the worker's government and stated: "This is a synonym of the dictatorship of the proletariat: all else are Social-Democratic deviations." What did friend Bordiga say then? He was in alliance with Comrade Daniel Renonlt and even with Frossard, against the Executive

Committee against the tactics of the united front. As you know, the French right-wing Communists attacked the tactics of the united front and played themselves up as left-wingers. The delegation of the Italian Communist Party, at that time led by Bordiga, formed a political alliance with the French against the E.C. on this question. I would recommend Comrade Bordiga to recollect this enlarged plenum as little as possible. (Applause.)

Comrade Bordiga states that he was never against the tactics of the united front. But every one in the Communist International knows that the Italian comrades stubbornly emphasised the fact that they were supporters of the united front only in the economic and not the political field. I ask, what is this point of view? It is a peculiarly "Italian" doctrine. Must we understand that the present fight against Mussolini is economic or political? The fight for the eight hour working day is economic in character, but at the same time in the present situation it is political. Comrade Bordiga continues to keep his position even when we exercised him to abjure his artificial, non-Communist separation of political and economic warfare. He considers this to be the honour of the Italian Communist Party. This is not a principle, it is a fetish.

I often try to find out what is the foundation for this petrified position of Italian comrades of Comrade Bordiga's type. Naturally, it cannot be a product of the idiosyncrasies of one or the other Italian leaders. It is a product of the history of the Italian Labour movement. One must seek its roots in the old Italian Socialist Party, that united Turati, Bordiga and Serrati in its ranks without discrimination.' Quite a mixture! However, there is a certain reaction at the present time. There is a desire to have a real, "firm," "pure," chosen Communist party, even without a large mass behind it. This is understandable. But, comrades, three or four years have already passed since Livorno. Men come and go, but the revolution continues to develop. The Italian movement is reviving and soon the Italian



proletariat will play a large part; will enter the movement enriched by plentiful new experiences. This movement will not be the same as the movement in 1919-20. With such a state of affairs, one should have discarded one's fetish long ago, and go hand in hand with the Communist International when it is in the right. The heart of the matter is not the "revision" of our old tactics or the division of the united front into economic and political fields, but in securing the support of the masses through economic and political warfare, and directing them to the path travelled by the Communist International. The measures used in England are one thing, those in America another, while those applied in Italy a third. Petrified "principles" are misplaced here, but Comrade Bordiga, persists in them.

This is what I wished to tell him. I am profoundly convinced that this is the opinion of the vast majority of the Congress, the real left Communist International. I am sure that, all will be done to come to an agreement with Comrade Bordiga. He, in his turn, must understand that he is wrong. Yesterday, he did not speak of the problem of securing the support of the majority. Seemingly, this question is clear to everybody. If Comrade Bordiga will say that he insists on the theses of the Rome Conference, we will answer him saying that these theses have been repeatedly refused. Comrade Bordiga did not mention this yesterday. Maybe this is a good sign that at the present time this is not a moot question and that the decision of the Third Congress on securing the majority remains in force. Now, Bordiga must abrogate his other errors and really go hand in hand with us. All the International and all the left-wing will be glad when the question of Bordiga is settled and removed from the agenda.

### **The Situation in America.**

A few words on Comrade Amter's speech on the American situation. I must say that Comrade Amter often does the American movement a bad turn. The situation in America is difficult. The Executive Committee has complete trust in the American Central Committee, headed by Foster and Rutherburg, two of the best men in America. Both the groups formed round those two leaders must unite and work together without friction. We know that the situation is serious there, but the line of action has been found and it will be followed honestly and revolutionally.

The American and English comrades both require aid. If tendency towards the right is to be seen among them we must understand that it is not the same as that among the comrades. As far as the question concerns the English and American comrades; it, is to be explained by their youth and inexperience. These are young parties. Comradely help and not fraction struggle is what is required here. The Executive Committee will see that the fraction struggle in America will be brought to an end so that these young parties receive the needed help. Only serious results can ensue from this.

In summarising all I have said, comrades, I consider that we must formulate something different to what was formulated by the Fourth Congress. However, the line of the Third and Fourth Congresses on the question of the international economic situation will remain in force. That which we have to revise, liquidate theoretically (or in case of necessity apply more rigorous measures) is the opportunist distortion of the line of the Communist International.

Let the International proletariat, the Social-Democrats and all our enemies know what our strategical manoeuvres are: We have nothing to fear from this, Comrade Smeral. The word "manoeuvre" is often interpreted to have a bad meaning, but to

a certain extent we can say that all our tactics are manoeuvres. Let all our enemies know that we manoeuvre when it is necessary. He who thinks that we propose a political amalgamation with the so-called "Labour parties" is mistaken. Let all the proletariat and the international counter-revolutionary Social-Democratic parties know that the opinion expressed here by several comrades headed by Comrade Radek is NOT the opinion of the Communist International. The Communist International holds the opposite view, the revolutionary Marxist and Leninist view.

### **We Require a World Party of Leninism.**

I now conclude. We exchange views here, often angrily, but all the same we have nothing to cause anger between us. Of course, the Communist International is not the Second International; it is not a parliament for exchanging opinions. We express our opinions openly among ourselves but our ideal is not to mix hot and cold and receive a lukewarm mixture. The Comintern must be monolithic. The opinions of the right-wing are supported by an insignificant minority at this Congress. We argue heatedly but the decisions carried by the highest instance in the Communist International have a decisive signification for all of us. We cannot be a parliament in the spirit of the Second International. If we carry a decision here it means that the minority cannot continue to act as before. You can fight "to the last drop of blood" at the Congress, but afterwards, when this convention which is the highest legal instance for Communists (we do not know of any higher court for Communists) when this congress gives its decision, it is essential to realise it shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand. There can be no question that the right winger will continue too act as before and actually become a fraction. The Communist

International will not allow this to take place.

A Russian comrade who has not participated directly in International work, but who has followed the movement closely, told me, "in looking at the Congress one cannot help noticing that it is different to all previous Congresses. Besides, it often was an assembly of pleasant guests who had come to Moscow and were gladly received. Now they are Communists who hold the fate of even large parties in their hands, they are more experienced, they give mature decisions and feel themselves equal members of the Communist International."

A new generation of real revolutionary leaders is growing from among the youth. There are delegations, the German for example, that have in them workmen with five years and more imprisonment behind them. Not only Russian, but foreign comrades are now mature, dependable elements. These are not guests who were hospitably received by the Russians, they are representatives of strong and weak parties, part of which have become strong mass parties with their own experiences, though they may be heterogeneous in their construction.

Many talk of Bolshevising our parties, but one must not understand this to mean the mechanical transplantation of Russian experience on to German and other parties. Comrade Lenin warned us of this error. We understand "Bolshevisation" to mean the assimilation of the Bolshevism which has a general International signification, and that which Lenin mentions in his booklet "Infantile Sickness of Leftism." We understand Bolshevisation to mean implacable hatred of the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democratic, traitorous leaders, it means the use of any strategical manoeuvre to fight the enemy. Bolshevisation is the inflexible will to achieve the hegemony of the proletariat; it is fiery hate of all bourgeois, counter-revolutionary. Social-Democratic leaders, of the centre and centrists, of semi-centrists and pacifists and of all freaks of bourgeois ideology. Bolshevisation means the formation of a

strongly cemented, monolithic, centralised organisation, that eradicates in a friendly and brotherly manner all differences in its ranks, as Lenin taught us to do. Bolshevisation is Marxism in action, it means devotion to the ideal of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the ideas of Comrade Lenin. This is what Bolshevisation means. It is not a mechanical imitation of Russian bolsheviks, it means the assimilation of all that was and is immortal in Bolshevism.

Many parties that were not even mentioned here have achieved great success in their development. This is the case with the Spanish Party, for example. Hundreds of comrades have been through bourgeois prisons there. Bolshevism is gaining ground in this classical country of syndicalism and anarchism. We have a strong group of honest, modest, revolutionary proletarians, who are ready to work seriously to help the proletarian revolution. (Applause). The French Party which not so long ago was seething with opportunism, has made considerable progress. For a considerable time it seemed that it would be impossible to form a serious party. The Bulgarian party has learned much, and we will hope that it will be safe from regressions into opportunism.

We are all certain that the movement is growing. Propaganda groups have become strong organisations that have hardened in fighting. All of us have the feeling that at this Fifth Congress we have the right to call ourselves a world party. The resolutions of the congress will be imbued with this spirit. Those comrades who support other points of view, other positions, will agree with our decision as a product of the collective experience and reasoning of all that is the best, most honest and revolutionary in the working class of the whole world.

(Prolonged applause, becoming an ovation. The delegates sing the "Internationale,")

## **Sixteenth Session, June 27th**

**Chairman: GEBHARDT.**

**Speaker: BUKHARIN.**

### **The Programme Question.**

On the session being opened, several personal explanations were made.

Comrade Bordiga said: Comrade Zinoviev claims that I was trying to use diplomatic methods in connection with the questions of the Left fraction in the International. I emphasised that I have never changed my opinion in this matter. As regards the article introduced by Comrade Zinoviev, his interpretation is absolutely incorrect; it is most likely due to the German translation, which was probably sent to Comrade Zinoviev by the Italian experts. In that article I wrote that fractions exist in every section of the International, which are fighting for the leadership of the Party. We agree that there ought to be no fractions and that the International ought to become a true Communist world-party. In order to achieve this aim, we must first create a unified organisation of the Communist International. Only in this way will the fractions vanish.

Comrade Varga: My remarks about the non-existence of an organised Communist Party in Hungary before the dictatorship has given rise to a misunderstanding. I did not intend in any way to deny the significance of the Hungarian Communist Party in the fight for the dictatorship. The Hungarian Communist Party was created late in the Autumn of 1918, and amalgamated with the Social-Democratic Party after the establishment of the dictatorship. The establishment of the

Hungarian dictatorship is undoubtedly the work of the Communist Party, first of all. But its existence was not of sufficient duration to enable it to develop a basis for an illegal Party after the overthrow of the dictatorship and during the period of the White Terror.

The Congress then proceeded to the discussion of the next item on the agenda: The Programme of the Communist International.

Theo chairman called upon Comrade Bukharin to report on the work of the Programme Commission.

### **Comrade Bukharin's Report.**

Comrades, in today's report I will deal only with new questions, not discussed in former reports.

Comrade Thalheimer and myself propose (and I believe we voice the opinion of the Commission on this) that at this Congress, we adopt not a final programme, but rather a draft which the Parties affiliated to the Communist International may discuss. This draft must be distributed to the sections for discussion in the name of the Congress.

In the first place, we need the programme for the ideological training of the Parties belonging to the Communist International. We also need the programme for its political significance, in order to determine its aims and the methods by which these aims are to be achieved. We also need the programme to demonstrate and to further our unity. I must say that I do not share Comrade Maslov's scepticism with relation to the programme. He published a rather good article in reply to Comrade Boris's article in *Die Internationale*—the theoretical magazine published by the German Party. But in this article, Comrade Maslov expresses himself against the adoption of this programme. He argues that sufficient

preparatory work has not been done and that various, purely theoretical questions, lie not yet solved. He proposes that only a programme of action be adopted in lieu of a programme. I do not agree with his contention, for I think that in the various documents already adopted by the Communist International, which date from our first Congress, we have sufficient material and also sufficient elucidation of the most important questions which concern the programme. I also think that, with a few exceptions we are justified in saying that even the purely theoretical questions have been, on the whole, well thrashed out. I think that there is no justification for Comrade Maslov's theoretical scepticism.

The first question we have to consider is —our philosophy. Not a word, has been said in the draft laid before the Fourth World Congress about the philosophy of the Communist International and of Communism in general. But since then we have gone through experiences which make it imperative for us to deal with this question. During the meeting of the Enlarged Executive we had a very heated discussion on the religious question. This, of course, is a tactical question, but not merely a tactical question. These discussions on the Enlarged Executive showed us that the question of our philosophy needs elucidation. There are more subtle facts which in a less crude form perhaps than the religious discussion, indicate that there are still some dangers ahead. We notice among Communist Parties, and to a still greater extent, among Social-Democratic parties —especially in the German Social-Democratic Party—a relapse into the old Hegelism, which we must designate as pre-Marxist and an idealistic viewpoint. This is particularly noticeable in the Social-Democrat Cuno, especially in his works on the State, the role and functions of this State. This is linked up with a certain relapse into Lassale-ism. I cannot, of course, deal here very fully with these questions, I merely want to emphasise, the fact of those relapses in the ranks of social



democracy. Unfortunately, Communist Parties are not immune from such relapses into the old Hegelism, certainly in a less prominent form than in Social-Democratic ranks, but which nevertheless reveal the same potentially harmful tendencies.

The second phenomenon is particularly noticeable in the Italian Party, although probably it is not conscious of it. This ideological deviation from revolutionary Marxism could be designated as idealistic voluntarism, which is substituted for Marxist activism. We find the same deviations in the Russian Party, but in a different form, namely in the form of agnostic positivism in lieu of Marxist materialism. Some comrades base their attitude on the teachings of a revolutionary school of thought, the so-called reflexology, and go back to activism. All this may be plausible enough, but it is not revolutionary Marxism. The point is that in all this, Marxist materialism is treated, avowedly or tacitly, as an obsolete view-point. This is a great danger, especially because bourgeois science and bourgeois philosophy and ideology are at present in a process of dissolution. This bourgeois ideology is tainted with mysticism, and therefore, in a period of general disintegration and chaos can to certain extent permeate proletarian circles. That is why our philosophy must be given a place in the programme. It must be precisely and concisely formulated. We must say that we are materialists; our viewpoint is the viewpoint of revolutionary materialist Marxism. This is a rather elastic formula, but we cannot do without it if we want to proclaim our revolutionary Marxism openly and meet the perils which I described to you.

As to the second group —the economic questions, I must say that if the influence of bourgeois ideology is noticeable on the philosophical field, it is also present in our economic doctrines. I should like to propose to the congress here to discuss Comrade Boris' article in *Die Internationale*. Not because I attach much importance to Comrade Boris'

arguments, but because his article show us in a crude form the dangers which are ahead. It is not an accident that a scientific organ conducted by educated people prints such foolish things and such social democratic rot. This article is a palpable proof that the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democratic theorists have gained a footing in our camp. The article is very outspoken. Certain compliments are paid to us in it. For instance, I am described as a petty bourgeois gone mad. Comrade Boris would like to send the entire bourgeoisie and also the petty bourgeoisie to the devil. He refuses to make common cause with any revolutionary parties in the Colonies whatever, on the plea that they are bourgeois parties. He also taboos partial socialisation. He says: to the devil with any kind of socialisation which is not complete socialisation! He wants to socialise everything, including the waste-paper basket of *Die Internationale*. We must socialise everything, or nothing. He is much more radical than the most radical elements represented here. But under this radical cloak, we have literally, a purely social democratic theory, and I fail to see how it was possible for the editors of *Die Internationale* not to notice it. This is ludicrous and at the same time dangerous. I will read you an extract from Comrade Boris' article to give you an idea what we have really contend with. One of the most important differences between the Second and Third Internationals is the conception of imperialism, the conception that a few great powers exploit the colonies, receive super-profits from these colonies and by means of them corrupt some working class sections, which provide the basis for Social-Democratic policy. Hitherto we thought that this conception is the most important point which separates us from the Second International. This conception is a strong weapon in our hands against social democracy, and against the imperialist policy of the bourgeoisie, a strong weapon which enable, us to establish connection between Western Europe and Asia, between the

industrial proletariat and the backward colonial peoples. We have in this conception a connecting link between the revolution of the industrial proletariat and colonial rebellions, which in the trend of history are nothing but component parts of the world revolutions. Against this, are directed all the attacks of the Social-Democrats, on the theoretical as well as on the practical field.

Now what does our super-clever Boris propose! He criticises my draft programme by saying:

“What is the implication of the assertion that the bourgeoisie raised the wages of the workers at home and thus gave them an interest in the plunder? The European and American workers are exploited. The workers receive the value of their labour power, i.e., the means of existence which are necessary to maintain and reproduce their class. Hence the means of existence must be sufficient to maintain the labourer as a labourer in his normal standard of living and to allow him to reproduce his kind. By fighting, the workers have been able to attain a certain standard of living. The basis for raising this standard was the development of producing power. The wages of the workers in the home countries were not raised by the bourgeoisie for the purpose of corrupting the super-profits of some sort or other. Moreover, there are no super profits; there is only one profit, and this is created by surplus labour in production.”

And further:

“We cannot speak of super-profits from the Colonies.”

And after he has set forth our mutual standpoint, he writes:

“And the Communist International is expected to elevate this class-conciliatory nonsense to its programme. And the these covering the war and post-war period are still more absurd. For the 19th century, Bukharin was able to use Karl Marx in a mutilated form. For the beginnings of the 20th century, he used Hilferding, whom he faithfully echoed, since

theoretically he is his disciple. But he has also developed a few of his own senseless theories of state capitalism.”

Thus, the whole doctrine of super-profits is fundamentally anti-Marxist; it is absurd, it is class-conciliatory, etc. Well, I don't know what class-conciliatory means. But first I want to make brief remark. Comrade Boris says that this doctrine is not Marxist at all—that it is fundamentally anti-Marxist. There is no such thing as super-profits; it is impossible and impermissible to speak of the exploitation of one country by another; that is sheer nonsense. I base myself on an author who was in no way a petty bourgeois run wild, i.e., the venerable Karl Marx. In his “Theories of Surplus Values,” Vol. 2, Part 2, Marx says: “Even a blind sow can find an acorn, and even a bourgeois economist can sometimes speak the truth.” And with reference to his famous blind sow, Marx says:

“J. B. Say, in his comments on Constanzio's translation of Ricardo, made just one correct observation on foreign trade. Profit can also be made by cheating. One wins what the other loses. Gains and losses within a country cancel each other. But this is not the case between various countries. And even according to Ricardo's own theory—which Say does not notice—three working days of one country can be exchanged for one working day of another. Here the law of values must be essentially modified. Or, as highly-skilled, complex labour within a country contains a certain proportion of unskilled, simple labour, so the working days of one country call bear a certain proportion to the working days of another country. In such a case, the richer country exploits the poorer, although the latter may gain by the exchange. J. S. Mill developed this theory in his “Some Unsettled Questions,” etc.

From this we can infer that Comrade Boris's conceptions are somewhat more profound than those of a blind sow. But, of course, that is not the decisive factor for us. The decisive factor is that we clearly see that this doctrine of super-profits of richer countries is an entirely Marxist doctrine. Marx put that down in black and white. But Marx proceeds from the hypothesis—only from this hypothesis—that there is a peaceful exchange between the countries. He does not speak of downright plunder; he does not speak of the results which must arise from the direct pressure of the State. What must be said when we also take this powerful means into consideration? The question is perfectly clear and comprehensible to any child. Only Comrade Boris believes that this doctrine is absurd.

Now for the arguments of Comrade Boris on wages. Naturally, the bourgeoisie can corrupt the working class only by means of higher wages. That is entirely correct. If, for instance, we consider the wages of the workers in the imperialist states, we observe that the workers receive their income in form of wages, but that is not the question. We must ask: Why are the wages of these workers higher than the average wage? One answer is: The wages are higher because the labour power is of a different nature, because the labour power is more highly skilled. That would be correct, but a further question is necessary: where is the basis? How did the possibility arise for these sections of the working class to transform their labour power into more highly skilled labour power? This must be answered. Of course, this question, the decisive question, did not occur to Comrade Boris. The wages of every section of the labour aristocracy conforms with its more highly skilled labour power. But why was just this labour more highly skilled? Why does this labour power belong to the highly-skilled workers and not to the unskilled worker? Practically the whole working class of the capitalist state is an aristocracy as compared with the colonial working class. That

is the basic question. This question is answered by our doctrine, which was created by Marx and developed by Engels and Lenin and which is clearly discussed even in the programme of the Russian Party. Comrade Boris absolutely overlooks this question. And that is a return, a complete return to the Second International. For if we do not have this premise, we cannot fight against the labour aristocracy, and against imperialist politics, and will not be in a condition theoretically to explain all these fundamentally important phenomena. Engels, as even those who are not specially educated in Marxism know, even speaks of the bourgeois proletariat in England. This is also an absurdity from Comrade Boris's standpoint, because he is not familiar with Marxist literature. We must ask: how is it that the editor of the *Die Internationale* cannot exercise a censorship? (Korsch: It was merely brought up for discussion!) Comrades, we cannot bring up every bit of piffle for discussion. That is a bit strong.

I come to the second question—one of the most important.

At the beginning of the war some bourgeois economists actually went mad in the effort to justify the imperialist war, and invented the theory that the war was a very useful thing from the standpoint of the development of productive power. The basis was that there was a decided increase in productive power in the metallurgical industry, in the war industry, in heavy industry. This resulted in a decrease of unemployment. Only very superficial “savants” failed to notice that from the standpoint of the next cycle of capitalism, all these phenomena in reality indicated a gigantic process of the destruction of productive power, of fixed capital. Arising out of the enormous increase of non-productive consumption, these imbecile illusions of the bourgeois economists vanished some time after the beginning of the war. Now, several years after the imperialist war, the courageous Boris, who, of course, is not crazy or absurd, writes the following:

“He (Bukharin) asserts that the war led to the destruction of a tremendous mass of means of production. The very opposite is true.” And in another passage he says:

“Neither can one talk of the destruction of productive forces by the war.”

How is this to be understood? We all know that ten million people were killed during the war, but according to the deductions of the super-wise Boris, it means that we have an increase of living productive forces; the destroyed railways mean an increase in means of communication, while the destroyed factories and villages in Germany and Belgium signify an increase of the productive forces. This is sheer nonsense. No sensible person can talk in this strain. One could say that the sores of the war have partly been healed. But this is not what Boris asserts: he claims that the war does not cause the destruction of productive forces.

I will quote only the most glaring instances. Boris is not a bit worried by the question of productive and non-productive consumption. This question is far more important than the question of destruction, of the loss of human lives, of which I have spoken. What is the meaning of this prosperity theory? It is a repetition of the views which existed among bourgeois economists, and which were accepted by the Social-Democrats. With these I dealt in my first report at the Fourth Congress. At that time I exposed the statements made by leading Social-Democrats upon this question. For instance, one of these gentleman goes so far as to say that capitalism has emerged even stronger from the war. Thus you see the “theoretical proportions.” The simplest liberals, the pacifists, the scribes, and the bourgeois economists, nearly all of them see more or less the economic weakness of the capitalist world, and not one of them denies this. And then the Social-Democrats, ostensibly Marxian, come along and declare that capitalism has emerged even stronger from the war. It sounds

almost like clamouring for a new war. An ostensible Communist chimes in with a similar statement. How can such things be taken up even as a matter for discussion, as Korsch says? We can very well say that super-profits and extra wages are the justification of the imperialist war. If the imperialist war resulted in an increase of the productive forces, then why should we raise the alarm?

The third theory is that of the crisis.

We are all aware of the great controversy between us and the Social-Democrats on the question of the crisis. We all know that the revisionists led by Bernstein, were the first to attempt to prove the trustification of industry, the creation of monopolist industry, tends to enable capitalism to overcome crises. There are different versions of this theory. In its crudest form it is represented by the pure and simple revisionists. When the differences between the orthodox radicals led by Kautsky and the ultra-revisionists led by Bernstein had disappeared, Kautsky, before the drafting of the Goerlitz programme, wrote that in our present theoretical discussion of the development of the capitalist system we may say quite frankly, that the theory of crisis must be “considerably modified.” What does it mean? It means that according to Kautsky the capitalist world has become more harmonised in recent years. We have dealt with this question more than once, and I think we have shown that in some branches of industry the state of anarchy has been partly removed as a result of the creation of monopolies. But the creation of trusts does not prevent crises; it rather produces them in a more extended and graduated manner.

Boris goes on to make the following suggestion:

“With the development of capitalism, constant capital increases in relation to the variable capital, constant fixed capital in relation to constant circulating capital, and particularly constant fixed capital in relation to the total capital.



The systematic management of production goes at the same rate.”

Then he says:

“The higher the organic composition of an industry is, the more systematic is the management of such an industry. Of course, increased systematisation leads not to a slackening but to an intensification of capitalist competition. Systematic management of production leads to systematic curtailment of production, which partly takes place instead of the crisis.”

This amounts to saying that the growth of productive forces signifies the growth of the organic composition of capitalism; the ever-increasing systematisation in the management of production, instead of crisis, a growth of the productive forces. What does it all mean? Does all this represent a Communist Party theory? It is pure revisionism, and a pure Social-Democratic theory.

There is yet another Social-Democratic doctrine which says that the circumstances during the war and the period of revolutionary ferment are such that the revolutionary proletariat, if it wants to carry out the revolution victoriously, must constantly bear in mind the necessity for the continuity of the process of production. This is what we are told by Kautsky, Hilferding, etc. In support of their opposition of the Bolshevik interpretation of revolutionary Marxism, they say that if we capture the machinery of the State, we shall lose all credits and shall be obliged to close the factories, and so on, This is certainly not the goal of our revolution.

As I bluntly put it at the last Congress, the use of telegraph poles for barricades will not encourage the increase of production. Revolution, like war, entails loss of productivity through the temporary destruction of the productive forces. Now, Comrade Boris comes along and reconstructs the whole doctrine of the continuity of production, He says: “I am going to put this in the form of a mathematical formula.” And so he

does, for he transforms the transitory decline of the productive forces into an absolute process. He goes on to say that this indicates that Bukharin “is seriously of the opinion that the Communist system of production will have to start literally with nothing in the way or means of production and distribution.” What a wonderfully clever fellow he is! He himself evolves the mathematical formula, and then he accuses me of it. If, for instance, we were to transform Comrade Boris’ relative foolishness into absolute foolishness by means of mathematical, historical and logical reasoning, we would also obtain the corresponding result. But we are content with having to deal with relative foolishness. What is the meaning of the thing in itself? It means nothing else than the restoration of the social-Democratic doctrine. For it is the best argument in the hands of the Social-Democracy against revolutionary methods. If we say that the revolution can be based only on the growth of the productive forces, then we get the doctrine established by Kautsky. We have shown that the process of relative and temporary transition renders the destruction of the productive forces absolutely inevitable. We have shown by various Marxian quotations that this transformation, these critical circumstances, serves as the basis for the revolutionary change. The Social-Democratic doctrine, on the contrary, asserts the impossibility of the revolution. They argue in this way: before the war the productive forces are not developed enough for the realisation of Socialism; during the war the social revolution is impossible because the productive forces are partly destroyed, and after the war one must wait until they will develop again, so by that time a new war will come. And thus the circle of stupidity runs merrily round. The expanded reproduction of Boris’s theory represents the expanded reproduction of this theory. See what a rich bouquet of theory we get! Negation of super-profits, negation of the wage-relations of the labour aristocracy. a theory of war-time prosperity, and consequently

a justification of the social-patriotic attitude during the war; a whole theory about crises, the Social-Democratic doctrine about the continuity of the process of production. It has quite a number of passages which sound very radical, but behind these radical words we have the foulcat Social-Democratic trash. And this is the thing that the super-wise Boris uses for his attack against us on the national question, on the colonial question, on the question of the united front, on the question of socialisation and so on and so forth. These are sufficient to illustrate the discussion is really about.

I have dealt with Comrade Boris at considerable length, not because I consider his arguments important, but in order to show that even in our own ranks there are Social-Democratic notions. Which we must combat with the utmost vigour.

If such things are written by the "Left" comrades, they are even more dangerous, because when the "Left" comrades, whose tactical and political orientation is quite proper, indulge in such foolish talk, they compromise the entire political orientation of the "Left" wing. We cannot be swayed by sympathy, we must protest in the most emphatic manner against such irrelevance, and expose the comrades in question.

I would now like to touch upon another theoretical question which was omitted in our previous discussions, viz., the question of crises: not of crises as a specific phenomenon of the transition period, but of crises in general. As you know, a theoretical discussion on the theory of crises is going on in Marxian circles. There are two formulas which are fundamentally different (disproportionality, and under consumption). We must have a formula which will express the contradiction between production and consumption as a component part of the anarchy of production. I will deal with this more fully on another occasion. I believe that in our draft programme we must be somewhat more cautious in formulating the process of the decay of capitalism. We already

see the empirical fact that on the whole we are facing the process of capitalist decay, but within this great process we see also a partial process of regeneration. Consequently, the picture is more chequered than we have thought it to be, and the chequered nature of the process of capitalist decay should cause us to proceed more cautiously in our future formulations than we have done hitherto. For this reason we must give a somewhat more exhaustive definition and a clearer description of the transition period. Without going into long comments, I should point out a few things. We must elaborate more clearly our ideas upon the period of the two processes, the fundamental processes of the proletarian revolution in itself does not yet constitute the world revolution, that there are also other disruptive processes which have a revolutionary sense, e.g., the national crises. Of course, if we consider these crises as isolated phenomena, they do not by any means constitute proletarian revolutions. It may be said likewise, that colonial revolts, which are so numerous, do not constitute merely proletarian revolts, but that also revolts of the petty bourgeoisie anti of the national revolutionary elements of the bourgeoisie. Taken by themselves, these secondary processes are not integral parts of the proletarian revolution. In the majority of cases they are not led by the proletariat. Objectively speaking, if these processes were entirely isolated, they would play quite a different part. But they cannot be spoken of as isolated phenomena. In the process of world history, these phenomena have direct bearing on the world revolution. And if the proletariat gains the leadership of this process, it will lead also the other classes, because they are component parts of the world revolution. This may sound paradoxical, but it is nevertheless, true. We should mention that during the transition period, two antagonistic forms of organisation may continue to exist side by side for a long time, bourgeois and proletarian forms: proletarian forms of economy and survivals of

commercial and capitalist-industrial relations, and many other incongruities of this kind; the whole picture would present motley complexity of things. We should make mention of the antagonistic forms of organisation. Also the various capitalist organisations, and the various initial stages of the Socialist society that is being built up. We should point out that after the conquest of political power, a new law of social development will operate. In the first place, development would proceed amidst the flames of revolution, and secondly, the law of social development would work concretely upon a new basis. Capitalist development is nothing but the extension of the capitalist contradictions; these contradictions will go on and lead to the collapse of the capitalist system of production, but after capture of power by the proletariat, the law of social development will not tend in the direction of extending the contradictions, but rather in the direction of their gradual elimination. Let me give an illustration. We have contradictions between the various forms of economy: if these contradictions were to go on increasing in acuteness, the whole order of society would collapse. But we hope that the process of competition will enable us to dispose more and more of the economic contradictory forms in an evolutionary way. And the contradictions which will exist after the conquest of political power, considered from a definite historical standpoint, will steadily diminish until they will finally vanish, and then we shall have the Communist Society. Of course, conflicts of a catastrophic nature may arise, e.g., revolts of the bourgeoisie, of the large peasants and so on. At a certain historical period, when the proletariat shall have established his complete economic, political and cultural hegemony, the law of economic development will work differently from what it did before. During the transition period there should be a bloc between the proletariat and some sections of the peasantry. Even in the ranks of the Communist International there is a

dangerous tendency to ignore the importance of this problem, of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, Everybody knows today that we want to go hand in hand with the peasantry, but this does not mean to say that we want theoretically to wipe out the differences between the proletariat and the peasantry. It is absolutely clear, that we must consider the peasantry as our allies, but this should not be misconstrued in the sense that we should transform ourselves into Workers' and Peasants' Parties. On the contrary, the more we retain our proletarian character, the more successful will be our policy in regard to the peasantry. In this connection we might draw a perfect parallel between our bloc and the bloc that exists among the possessing classes. For instance, there is quite a big difference between the large landowners and the industrial bourgeoisie. It is true that the growth of financial capitalism and banking has enabled the large landowners to obtain their revenues in the form of dividends; nevertheless, there are still large and important differences between the bourgeoisie and the large landowners, particularly the so-called feudal or semi-feudal large landowners—not the large landowners who carry on capitalistic enterprises on the land. But in spite of these differences there is a bloc between these classes, and constant mutual support. As against this bloc, we should establish the bloc of workers and peasants. The differences between the proletariat and the peasantry have not vanished any more than the differences between the large landowners and the capitalistic bourgeoisie has vanished; but just as the whole of the ruling class supports the bourgeois bloc, so must we support, strengthen and consolidate our policy during the whole of the transition period by this bloc between the proletariat and the peasantry.

I now come to the question of the new economic policy which I consider to be the most important part of my report.

First of all, a few introductory remarks. After the

introduction of the new economic policy, we, the Russian Communists, and also our friends, the foreign parties, almost without exception, had a feeling that we had acted somewhat improperly, and that we ought to apologise for the new economic policy. In its most subtle form, this apologist attitude consisted in our considering the new economic policy exclusively from the standpoint of political expediency, as a political concession to the petty bourgeoisie. We did not think the new economic policy to be expedient and rational in itself. Now, however, we, may quite conscientiously say the very opposite. The question of the new economic policy on the whole should be formulated by us in the following manner (later on I will deal with it more exhaustively). The only correct economic policy for the proletariat, the policy which insures the growth of productive forces, is the policy which we described as the "new economic policy." War Communism was nothing else but a corrective of this new economic policy, the necessary corrective for the political expression of the direct class war against the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeois elements. I believe that we should state these ideas quite clearly, and for this reason, comrades, I must ask to be excused if I shall deal with these ideas in some detail.

Comrades, the fundamental facts, the fundamental phenomenon which will confront the victorious proletariat after the conquest, of political power, will be the variety of the forms of economy with which it will have to deal. In no country, not even in the most capitalistically developed, are the productive forces so highly developed as to have caused the disappearance of all the intermediate strata. No Marxist will assert that the social revolution cannot come unless every petty bourgeois, every handicraftsman, every small capitalist shall have disappeared. It would be a foolish exaggeration of the kind contrived by our opponents to make a caricature of Marxism.

None of us thought that social revolution will only come when the last peasant will have disappeared: we know that it will come when the contradictions of the capitalist system will have produced a situation on the social chessboard which will call forth revolution. Thus, in all countries without exception (of course in some countries to a greater extent than in others) we shall have to deal with a great variety of economic forms. And that is the main fact. With it are connected two other main facts of economic and political life. The second fact is as follows: There are as many different economic forms as there are classes or rather social strata. As long as we have small enterprises we shall have small producers, as long as there are small farms in the countryside we shall have peasants and as long as we have small capitalist enterprises, we shall have small capitalists and also handicraftsmen. Thus we see that the various economic forms correspond with the various classes or strata of society. There is another main fact connected with this, which will play an important part after the conquest of political power. If we leave this third fact out of sight and out of account, we run the risk of adopting an erroneous and even harmful policy. This third factor is as important as the above-mentioned two main facts, and consists in the heterogeneity of economic motives, of economic impulses. Thus, if we have different economic forms, we also have different economic motives. The motives of the peasantry differ from those of big capitalists.

The economic motives of socialised enterprises differ from those of the big peasantry. Even the economic motives of the big peasantry differ from those of the small peasantry.

What then is the main problem of our economic policy in the face of this basic problem? This main problem could be formulated as follows: it is the problem of coordinating and subordinating firstly, economic stimuli.

In the face of such heterogeneity, we must, of course,



consolidate the hegemony of the proletariat also on the economic field. What does this mean? It means that our socialised enterprises must have the hegemony in our economic life, and that the other economic forms, consequently all intermediate motives, must be subordinate to this economic hegemony. If, as Comrade Boris says, there were no differences and no variety of forms, it would be an easy matter to establish Socialism. Our esteemed opponent gets rid of the entire transition period, for this period pre-supposes variety of economic forms. The transition period is the period during which the most advanced economic forms squeeze out other forms and classes. This is a complicated art. But this is the only right way to look at the economic policy of the victorious proletariat. It is not difficult to understand why we cannot accept complete socialisation á la Boris. It would be a caricature. Trotsky once said in arguing with extreme centralists, that centralism consists in placing a big ink pot in the Red Square into which all the writers from the various parts of the Soviet Union are to dip their pens Why is it impossible carry out this complete socialisation á la Boris! Because of the variety of the economic forms within our Soviet Union. We are unable to carry this through for technical reasons. We have not enough organisational forces to socialise everything, even the peasant allotments. This is one of the reasons. Secondly, it is politically impossible, because, by attempting it, we would rouse the petty bourgeoisie and all the traders against the victorious proletariat. Thirdly, because to attempt to socialise everything all at once, such heterogeneous enterprises would require a gigantic administrative apparatus the cost of which would be higher than that of anarchic production. This played an important part during the period of war Communism. This excessively centralised form of government necessitated such a gigantic State apparatus that it consumed everything. We still feel the consequences of this disease. The problem of

distribution between productive and unproductive consumption is one of the most important problems of the victorious proletariat.

The New Economic Policy is the only correct and true proletarian economic policy. When I speak of the only correct economic policy of the proletariat, I mean a policy based on the growth of productive forces, and a policy based which encourages this growth. When from this standpoint, we make a comparison between economic policy, new economic policy, and War Communism; when we compare the two forms of this policy, we come to a full understanding of the difference between them. What was war Communism! It was rational consumption of existing food stores. It seized or requisitioned from every peasant and from every locality anything that was to be had, in order to provide for the army and for the urban proletariat. At that time this was the only possible policy, the first strategical position which gave us a firm footing in the economic life of the country. We seized power in economic organisation, we also partly destroyed them (this too was a good thing, it is in fact a justification of the policy of war communism). On the other hand we established rational consumption of the existing food stores. That we could not give encouragement to productive forces, is self-understood. How could we encourage agriculture, if we took away all the surplus produce? What motive could the peasantry have for production? We have no economic subordination of small farms, and, therefore, economic subordination of the peasant class, hence no subordination of the economic stimuli of this class—hence, from the standpoint of productive forces, we had to record not an advance, but a retreat. The peasants refused to produce.

There was a great conflict between our State policy and the economic motives and impulses of these strata of the population, which made the partial existence of these

economic forms impossible and roused the indignation of these classes against this policy. It is a good thing that we adopted the new policy ourselves. In making a careful survey of this matter, we recognise the economic mistakes we made and we realise what real proletarian economic policy must be like.

Comrades, I should like to deal here with an argument used by Boris. His justification of the demand for complete socialisation is—that every national economy is a unity, and being a unity, requires just such a policy. This sounds very radical. but in reality it is theoretical opportunism. Why? Not only is there a unity, but there is also a unity of contradictions. To a certain extent, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is also a social unity. But there are contradictions within it, and the same may be said of all economic forms. This, in fact, is the whole problem. The bourgeoisie has coordinated these contradicting elements. We must have another kind of coordination. To deny this problem, one must assume that society represents an united whole, and not a unity of contradictions.

Further, if we regard the varieties of economic forms as the main phenomenon, it becomes quite clear that the most important manifestations arising out of the diversity of production are forms of market relations. And here I think we must deal with the following prospects. In the long run as Boris says—the proletarian section of economic life, the social enterprises in industry and agriculture, will squeeze out the forms of private capitalism, the small producers, by means of competition in the markets. Formerly our idea was somewhat as follows: we have a portion of the economic life of the country; other, socially hostile, or partially socially hostile elements have the other portion, and these we shall be able to swallow up by the direct methods of state power and without market relations. In all probability; judging by empirical facts—not merely by the Russian experience, but *mutatis mutandis*

by the experiences of other countries—what will actually happen will be that owing to the anarchy of production, market relations will be necessary and, therefore, the competitive struggle between the state forms of proletarian economy; between the socialised industries and the other forms of industry. Formally, the method is the same as under the capitalist economic system. The great difference lies in the fact that under the capitalist economic system, large and medium-sized industries have almost the same economic content. What was the distinction? There was no distinction in principle. But if we have varieties of economic forms after the organisation of power, the economic forms are in general bound up with the socially antagonistic content of the enterprises. If the industries are in the hands of private capital, a competitive struggle against them by the large proletarian industries will take place—a revolutionary struggle, a class struggle against the bourgeoisie. That prosaic thing, market competition, is nothing but a specific, new forms of the class struggle. On the one hand we have large industries with a proletarian content, and on the other, forms which have a different social content. This is perhaps the most important point we must grasp; since all doubts and misunderstandings, all attacks upon NEP and the present situation in Russia proceed from the fact that the comrades concerned fail to understand the entirely new forms of class struggle based upon economic competition. Formally, matters are almost the same as they were under capitalism, the producer received wages, the whole process goes on as in capitalist society. But the important thing is, that in spite of this formal identity, there exist a difference in principle. When we examine the economics of the proletarian dictatorship, we must bear in mind that the variety of economic forms is bound up with the variety of the social content of industry.

Here comrades, I think belongs the idea of the development of economic planning. We formerly believed that

we had only to determine the plan and the plan would mechanically be carried into effect. We know that economic planning after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat is difficult to carry into practice; in other words, we can only carry out economic planning to the extent that the material basis for it exists. And this material basis for economic planning is nothing but the result of the squeezing out of backward economic forms by the superior large industries with a proletarian social content.

A certain parallel can be drawn between capitalist production in the transition period, namely, the process of the centralisation of capital and the squeezing out of backward forms by market competition, the limit of which is state capitalism. The same is true with us: we have the squeezing out of backward economic forms by market competition and the centralisation of industry. And the more centralisation proceeds, the more is the basis for economic planning created. The limit, however, is not state capitalism, but socialism.

Here we have an entirely new conception. But I think we can safely say that only this perspective is a correct one; it is the only one which be theoretically proved. And it is just this perspective which is the strongest weapon against every form of pessimism on this subject. The attitude. Alas! the small producer is being permitted; alas! they are permitting even the capitalists. And all the other classes are the result of a failure to understand the phenomena. In the early stages the superiority of large industry was not so apparent, since during the process of general economic disruption it is not immediately possible to carry on large industry. The same is true of commerce, where there are machines but no demand for them, where there is no circulating capital to set the apparatus going. But as soon as competition between large industry and small industry begins, we immediately begin to perceive the extent of the superiority of large industry. The competitive capacity of large

industry will therefore steadily increase. What grounds are there for pessimism? We shall certainly have crises, but these crises will disappear when we have complete economic planning. We shall in all probability have crises for many years to come, but *the general line* of the squeezing out of other economic forms, which do not possess a social character, is the only right one and represents the victorious prospect of our social development. The contradiction between capitalist forms and social forms is a great problem, a very sinister problem. But if we grasp what I have here stated, the matter becomes quite clear. We, indeed, have capitalist forms, wage relations; we have money circulation instead of distribution of goods; we have banks and stock exchanges, ay! even stock exchanges, the holy of holies of the capitalist class. We have competition and even profit-making in our state industries. But here we can find a parallel in the military sphere. Our army is to a large extent similar to any ordinary bourgeois army. We originally believed that the structure of our army would be something quite different, there would be no compulsory discipline but only voluntary discipline. But experience has proved that there can be no question of voluntary discipline in the literal sense of the word, although, of course, we have more voluntary discipline in our army than in any other army. But various coercive measures are adopted in the army, and we cannot do without them: we even shoot deserters. This is the highest means of coercion in the hands of the State. The outward structure is similar to that of the bourgeois army. But that is not the most important point. What is really the most important, is the different class character of the army.

The same applies to this economic fight. The new economic policy, which is already fairly old, has also many inherent contradictions, not only of form and substance, but also contradictions of a more serious nature, especially during the initial stage of proletarian economic policy. Our socialised

enterprises and institutions are growing, but the same must also be said of petty bourgeois enterprises. The contradictions between the rationality of our economic life represented by small capitalists and private traders is growing. Thus, we have already not only a contradiction between form and substance, but contradiction between various social forms and social forces. Naturally the class struggle on the economic field will definitely solve this question.

I said that we will arrive at our final Socialist economic order by means of various economic struggles, in which big enterprises will be in the hands of the proletariat. But the matter is not so simple, because proletarian dictatorship is able to co-operate with the small producer under his hegemony. This is very important, especially as far as the peasantry is concerned. A situation is possible in which the proletariat and the proletarian big enterprises form a bloc with the small producers, and co-operate with them. And we must be very careful not to underestimate this question of small producers as a bulwark of private trading.

After a few explanatory remarks on war Communism, we shall be able to see that the new economic policy is not a corrective of war Communism, but that the new economic policy the only expedient policy of the proletariat. War Communism on the contrary, appears to be a corrective of the new economic policy. But why is it a corrective! Because it is necessitated not by a rational economic policy, but by direct political struggle. In many cases there are conflicts between the viewpoint of economic rationality, namely between the formula of the necessity of economic policy and the necessity and expediency of direct political struggle. During the rising, for instance, we destroy material values, but we do the same when defending the fatherland. If we make war on the bourgeoisie and desire also to make a clean sweep of the petty bourgeoisie, we have only to take the necessary measures for the overthrow

of the bourgeoisie: we must get into our hands the sources of its natural wealth. I told you that we took away everything from the peasants. Was this; necessary? Certainly, but in what sense was it necessary and expedient? It was the necessity and expediency of war. Had we acted differently, we should have lost the war. And without victory in war further development was impossible. That is why war Communism was essential. I reiterate most emphatically that the expediency of direct political struggle in the economic life was also bound up with the decline of productive forces. But when this political task has been fulfilled, when our power and the dictatorship of the proletariat are firmly established, and it is only matter of bringing the productive forces into motion, and to do everything to encourage them—then a policy of war Communism is no longer justified. With us, the policy of war Communism preceded the economic policy. It is possible that things will be different in other countries. For instance, in a country where the bourgeoisie is easily over-thrown and the proletariat is well trained and disciplined, the latter will realise the expediency and necessity of the new economic policy. But when a blockade intervenes, requisition or partial requisition becomes necessary. On the whole, war Communism will probably have to be applied in many countries to a lesser or greater extent. This will be necessary, because the bourgeoisie will be able to offer energetic resistance to the proletariat. But the important point is that all our parties should be able to distinguish between political and economic expediency and that they adapt it to the situation in their respective countries.

I should like to say a few words on the agrarian question. This question was very fully discussed at our Congresses. We have Comrade Lenin's theses and the results of the work of our various commissions. Nevertheless, I should, like to say a few more words. There is a certain tendency within our ranks, which, I think, constitute a considerable danger. But there is



already a tendency among some of our comrades to deduce from our attitude towards the peasantry, that in agriculture, there is no difference between small and big enterprises. These comrades contend that we need only organise the peasant parties or re-organise our own. parties on a proletarian-peasant basis. In the face of this tendency, we must state here most emphatically that we adhere to the principle of big enterprises in agriculture. We believe that the development of big agricultural enterprises is the only means to increase agricultural production. But the solution of this problem is different now than in the pre-war period. Before the war, during the period of so-called healthy capitalism, our main task consisted in getting rid of all relics of feudalism, of sweeping away all obstacles which stood in our way. We asked: does victory belong to big or small production? Contrary to the revisionists, we said: big production is more progressive than small production.

Well, we are now in a different epoch. Our task does not consist in prognosticating the development of agriculture. Our task is to find an ally and we must adopt a different orientation to be able to break down the power of capitalism. For this purpose we are even entitled to parcel out farms at the expense of big landed property, in order to secure an ally or this is the main point. At present, it is not a question of prognosticating if big enterprises are superior to smaller enterprises, but, of finding means to overthrow capitalism. This is our present orientation, and everything else is based on it. To win over the peasantry, we must be able to give it something, in accordance with the nature of the various countries and the social importance of the peasantry in these countries. For the high price we have to pay now for the progress of revolution, we will be compensated later, when we shall have the pre-requisites of dictatorship—the entire industry in our hands. Then we shall be able to introduce more progressive forms of

agriculture. Why—with your permission, I will make a very important but purely theoretical remark. One of the greatest contradictions in the capitalist system, especially during the last decades of capitalist methods of production, consisted in the gulf existed between industry and agriculture. During that period we witnessed an ever-growing disproportion between the growth of productive forces in industry and the growth of productive forces in agriculture. Why? I am unable to give a detailed answer to this question. The most important phenomenon in this connection is the appearance of a new factor, so-called absolute rent. Comrades will find this subject fully explained in the third volume of “Capital.” Thus, the obstacles in the way of technical progress, of the application of modern machinery in agriculture are connected with absolute rent in agriculture. And that is why we have disproportionate development. Agriculture was, so to speak, under the yoke of industry. We can and shall free agriculture from this yoke to the extent in which we get rid of this disproportion in capitalist methods of production. If from the viewpoint of economic rationality, we stand to lose something by parcelling out the estates of big landowners, we shall be compensated, and compensated generously, through the abolition of absolute rent, through cooperation with the peasantry and the systematic intervention of socialised industries in agriculture. I think that in this connection, we must bear in mind what Lenin said in his last article. We had a special form of so-called agrarian socialism in the country-side even in the time of capitalist prosperity. This was a very peculiar ideology. It had its material basis in the growth of peasant organisations which were under the hegemony of big landowners, priests, etc. There were agricultural syndicates, co-operatives, and various other forms of organisation, as in Denmark, for instance. On this basis the so-called agrarian and co-operative Socialism developed. All this, of course, was utopian. To believe that

tendencies coming from this side would develop into Anti-Capitalist organisations, was a semi-capitalist illusion. But comrades, the establishment of proletarian dictatorship changes the situation in this respect. The former development of all these institutions, was the only possible development in a capitalist organism and under a capitalist State. All these institutions became part and parcel of the organism and economic body of the capitalist state. But, under proletarian dictatorship, when industries are socialised, the growth of these institutions (wherever it is possible to replace the hegemony of the big landowners, etc., by the economic hegemony of the proletariat) means that these institutions become part and parcel of the proletarian economic body.

That is why this question has a very different aspect in the epoch of proletarian dictatorship. And this is very important.

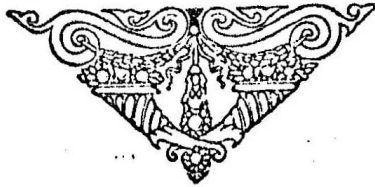
Comrades, we believe that in accordance with the decision of the Fourth Congress, we must also have a tactical-strategic section in our programme. I think that we shall have to discuss this section of our programme a little later, when the commission will have made some headway in its work, and when the final or almost final draft will be before you. I think it will be more expedient to do this after the discussion, for I hope that there will be a discussion.

To re-capitulate my main ideas: I think that the reports presented at the Fourth Congress must be the basis of our new attitude towards this question. What is actually new is the declaration of our philosophy and the more comprehensive treatment of the new economic policy which I propose should be regarded as the economic policy of the victorious proletariat.

This is the most important part of my report, and I think that in drawing up our plan, we must elaborate these points very carefully in order to clear away any possible doubts on this subject. I am absolutely opposed to raising the question of

the programme. I think we shall do the right thing if we go from here with the approved plan which the Congress shall decide should be discussed, and if we leave the final decision to the next Congress.

What we need now, are definite lines for our future activity. It is not an easy proposition, but this should not alarm us. We will elaborate this programme, provided that comrades show a little interest in it. Surely it cannot be that the critical capacity of the International is centred in Boris alone. This lack of interest in theoretical questions which was always a characteristic of reformist tendencies, is a dangerous symptom. Nearly in all parties, including the Russian Party, lack of interest in theoretical questions was always a sign of opportunism. We must do our utmost to combat theoretical opportunism and scepticism. There are enough forces in the International to solve also theoretical problems. (Applause).



## **Seventeenth Session, June 27th**

**Chairman: GEBHARDT.**

### **PROGRAMME QUESTIONS.**

#### **Supplementary Report by Comrade H. Thalheimer.**

Comrades: The first question which was discussed was the question of accumulation, that is to say, Rosa Luxemburg's theory of accumulation. We have agreed not to formulate this for the programme, because a theoretical discussion must be fully worked out before one can reach conclusions, and make the whole question clear. We were also influenced by the fact that both of us, Bukharin and I, disagree with Kautsky's explanation of imperialism. There would have been no advantage, therefore, in discussing all these theoretical differences.

The second question, and perhaps the most important controversial question discussed by the last Congress in the debate on the programme, was the question of whether transitional and partial demands should be included in the general programme of the Communist International. This question was decided by the Fourth Congress, which resolved that the definition of the nature of and necessity for transitional and partial demands should be placed in the general programme, while the particular application of these demands in relation to concrete questions, should be left to the national programme. It is well known that Comrade Lenin was in complete agreement with these decisions, and as their

theoretical correctness has already been established, we do not see any reason to alter them, The principle laid down was that transitional and partial demands cannot be excluded so long as the bourgeoisie has not been conquered, and the dictatorship of the proletariat has not been entered upon and firmly established.

I shall deal chiefly with the debates which have so far taken place in the programme commission, which may simplify future discussion. I shall take the points in the order in which they were discussed in the commission.

The first question which was discussed, and which Bukharin deal with very fully, was the question of the different forms of the transition to Socialism, especially the concrete questions of NEP and of war Communism, in so far as both those questions have a general application. With regard to the question whether NEP could have any application to other countries beside Russia as a transition to Socialism, there was no difference of opinion in the commission, everyone was in full agreement with the views developed by Bukharin. On the other hand, there was considerable discussion of the question of war Communism and the part which it might have to play in other countries—whether war Communism was a necessary preliminary stage to NEP or not!

The second question was the formula with which the fact that NEP is of general application should be expressed in the programme. The conclusion reached was that the form “NEP” itself cannot be mentioned, but the important point is to get its essential meaning into the programme.

What are the essential characteristics of NEP? They are: calculation according to capitalistic methods: retention of the functions of money: retention of the form of trusts: continuance of banks and exchanges. In short, the combination of the organisational forms of capitalism with the fundamental transformation of their social significance. It may be of some

interest to note here that these general forms of the transition to Socialism, as we regard NEP, are already sketched out by Marx. I refer to the third volume of "Capital," and to Marx's notes on the Gotha programme, where he says that in the transition to Socialism we would at first have to adapt ourselves to the economic forms left by capitalism, and that we shall only be able to proceed too full Communism at a further stage of development, when we have eliminated those forms.

Now as to the question of war Communism, which I must defend a little against Comrade Bukharin. What is the true nature of war Communism? It can be defined as a rational centralised method of distribution, adapted to the necessities of war. The essential pre-requisite for it, is that the resource which makes economic organisation possible, should be present. It is necessary to lay particular stress on this. The policy of war Communism could never have been carried out in Russia without the resources which Czarism had left behind it.

What is the distinguishing mark of war Communism from the economic point of view? Abolition of money, highly centralised control, no private trading, the crippling of the small trader, and the requisitioning of agricultural produce. In order to decide whether war Communism should form a feature of our programme, it is necessary to remember that war Communism was not evolved from any theoretical programme drawn up before-hand by the Russian Communist Party, but simply developed out of the necessities of revolutionary strategy. What were these necessities? They were mainly two: the first, to drive out the bourgeoisie from all those positions the economic strength of which could be utilised in the political struggle. And the necessity for this endures until the bourgeoisie has been subjugated, and placed under the control of the working class, the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is the first aspect.

The second essential function of war Communism, is to

supply the army and the urban industrial population with food. This function must, of course, be closely related to the fact that requisitions of agricultural produce are not made until the peasants have had the land handed over to them by the industrial workers, so that the requisitions of agricultural produce are not made until the peasants have had the land handed over to them by the industrial workers, so that the requisitions, taken from the peasants, could be regarded as a receipt given by them to the working class in exchange for the land they have received.

If we are attempting to reach a general formula for the relation of NEP to war Communism, we must realise quite clearly that NEP would never been possible in Russia unless it had succeeded a preliminary stage of war Communism. It would not have been possible because the will of the bourgeoisie, and their resistance, had first to be thoroughly broken, before they were ready to submit to the leadership of the working class. Therefore, we may assert that a longer or shorter period of war Communism must precede NEP in future revolutions.

The decision as to how far war Communism can or must proceed, will depend upon the particular conditions in a given country, and also on the international conditions in which the proletariat of a particular country seizes power, that is to say, on how much fighting is necessary before the bourgeoisie is subjugated to the leadership of the working class.

Obviously a proletarian revolution which takes place in a country where the neighbouring countries are already nearly ripe for revolution, and which defeats its adversaries, not in the course of period of years, but in a much shorter time, and is able to consolidate its power, will have to adopt and alter both the forms and the duration of war Communism.

It is equally clear that the forms of the New Economic Policy will also vary in different countries. It is both possible



and probable that in countries where the capitalist system is highly developed and is much greater in proportion to the pre-capitalistic, peasant stage of production than it was in Russia, the NEP may be developed much further than it has been here in Russia. The form in which NEP is developed depends very much upon the stage towards which the industries taken over by the proletarian revolution have developed. It depends upon the degree to which industry has been centralised, its strength in proportion to that of peasant production, its technical organisation, its relation to finance capital, to petty bourgeois capital, etc. All these aspects must be taken into consideration.

Naturally we cannot lay down all the concrete adaptations of this kind, in our programme. We must be content to lay down the essential principles of the New Economic Policy, as the general form of the transition to Socialism, and the essential principles of war Communism, as the adaptation of economic necessity to the requirement of revolutionary strategy; that is to say, war Communism must be regarded from the aspect of the defeat of the bourgeoisie, the conduct of a civil war, and of possible intervention.

The commission unanimously agreed that the transition to Socialism must be laid down in the programme from these points of view.

Another question discussed was that of the various divisions of the working class. A full report was given to the programme commission of all the various groupings of the working class in relation to its political tendencies, groupings and parties. The main point on which stress was laid, was the part played by the aristocracy of labour in a period of imperialism, its relation to the superior imperialistic power of certain countries, and the relation of the aristocracy of labour to opportunism, and the opportunistic tendencies in the working class. But, in considering these points, it was also realised that it was not only important to distinguish these various divisions,

but equally important to make it clear that these divisions are of a transitory and merely temporary nature. It must not be forgotten, in considering all these groupings, that above and beyond them there exists the fundamental identity of interest of the working class as an economic class. It is this fundamental unity of the working class founded upon its place in production, which must be our starting point when we review the division and differentiations in the working class, and to unite them under a single leadership, the leadership of the Communist Party.

We also reported upon the various types of countries. It had been decided similarly by the Fourth Congress that this description of the different countries should be made as an introduction to the national programmes, and that it should be made from the point of view of revolutionary strategy, of the conquest of political power. Comrade Varga spoke on this subject, and has also submitted a draft of the descriptions. The aspects considered here were as follows:

First, the aspect of economic development, including the following three questions: (1) whether a country may be expected to develop further under the capitalistic system or not; (2) whether a given country has already reached its highest stage of development, or passed it; (3) the problem of the Soviet States where the proletariat has already seized power, and broken down the capitalistic framework.

Secondly, the classification of countries according as to whether they are the exploiters or the exploited in imperialistic politics; whether they are partially or wholly independent of the great imperialistic powers.

Thirdly, the class structure of the various countries, and the relative strength of the various classes in each country, of course, with special reference to the working class.

During the discussion special stress was laid upon the necessity to differentiate between development of a country

from the point of view of revolutionary strategy, and its development from the point of view of Socialism. The aspects which determine the transition to Socialism are not the same as those which determine the transition to revolution.

A typical instance of the way in which these two points of view can be confused, is provided by Kautsky, and showed itself in a particularly blatant way in his treatment of the question of the Russian revolution. For in Russia we can see, with the greatest clearness, the difference between the two aspects.

Where revolutionary development was concerned, our experiences have shown that Russia was far in advance of all other countries. But as soon as political power had been conquered, it soon became evident that Russia was backward, where the evolution of socialism was concerned. These two circumstances are closely related to one another. The comparative backwardness and lack of economic development in Soviet Russia, i.e., the large proportion of peasant to industrial workers, produced the peculiar character of our revolution, namely the union of the proletariat with the peasants. It was this union which made the country ripe for revolution, and it is also this union which is producing the greatest difficulties in the present period of transition to Socialism.

To turn now to the agrarian question. The commission received a detailed report on the agrarian programme in its relation to the general programme. Lenin's theses on the agrarian question at the Second Congress and the theses of the Fourth Congress, were taken as a foundation. The points discussed were the following.

The attitude which should, be adopted towards the various bourgeois projects for agrarian reform, such as that of dividing up large estates for the benefit of poor peasants. The question was asked, what should be the attitude of the Communist

programme to bourgeois plans of this kind?

The Communist Parties cannot afford to take up an attitude of neutrality or of opposition to plans of this kind, least of all when they have already gained a hold on the masses; but neither must they be dragged along at the heel of a movement of this kind, they must take up the only possible attitude, which is to drive such movements further forward, and to put forward demands which will force them on towards revolution. For instance, in relation to the bourgeois schemes for agrarian reform, it is typical that the division of land is never suggested except for compensation. We must hold firmly in our programme to the demand that distribution of land should always take place without compensation.

Then the question of small and large scale farms was discussed, with special reference to the views represented by revisionists like David. Superficially it might appear that by supporting the division of land at the present moment, we were approaching, in some respects, the point of view of these revisionists. But that is not the case. We look at things from the point of view of revolutionary strategy, Daniel looks at them from the point of view of reformist politics. We define our own attitude by declining that we take our whole stand on the necessity for large-scale farming. In agriculture as in other forms of production, we aim at the development of large-scale production. This means, of course, that we do everything that is possible, politically and economically for this end, but we must lay stress upon it as our fundamental standpoint, because it is the standpoint necessary for the development of Socialism.

You are aware that among the Social-Democrats the antagonism which exists between the urban worker as purchaser, and the peasant as seller of food, has been made much of in late years. And the stress laid upon this antagonism was a means towards uniting the urban worker with the bourgeoisie against the smaller peasantry. What have we to any

about this of course, we have to admit that antagonism between the worker and the peasant does exist, where the price of food is concerned. But, the difference, between the worker as purchaser and the peasant as seller of food is nothing in comparison to that antagonism between the workers and the peasants together on one side and the great capitalists and big landlords together on the other.

The question of land nationalisation, and the part it should play in our programme was also discussed. With regard to the nationalisation of large estates there is nothing to be discussed. The only question that arises is shall small and medium sized properties be nationalised? On this question the commission decided to leave the matter open, but to indicate in the programme that profiteering and speculation in land should be prohibited by law. One can extend the principle of nationalisation by law to the small and medium-sized properties, and declare that the peasant is not the owner of his land, but is permitted to enjoy only the use of it, thus limiting his power of selling it or giving it away. Or one can say just the opposite, as in the German agrarian programme, i.e., that the possessions of these poor and middle peasantry, will not be touched, and the one can add all sorts of legal restriction preventing, buying, selling, giving away, or inheriting land. We have indicated the latter method as the most suitable one in general, because in the west of Europe the conception which the small and middle peasantry have of property is far more deeply rooted than was the case in Russia.

Then, comrades, there is still the national question. I will mention only the points which were discussed in the Programme Commission. There were two essential points. Firstly, how far shall the Communist Parties of oppressed nationalities make use of the right which our programme gives them for national self-determination even to the point of secession; that is, how far or under what circumstances shall

they apply this programme slogan practically and politically? Well, comrades, the point of view which must serve as our criterion can only be a general point of view—that the national points of view must be entirely subjected, under all circumstances to the point of view of the International class struggle. All these various questions must be concretely solved from this point of view.

The second question was whether the slogan of the right of self-determination was sufficient for the solution of all national questions. It was pointed out that a number of national questions existed in countries, like the United States, where there is an extraordinarily mixed population; which shows that the slogan of the right of self-determination cannot solve all national questions. Then there is the race question. The Programme Commission was of the opinion that the slogan of the right of self-determination must be supplemented by another slogan: “Equal rights for all nationalities and races.” The Programme Commission also discussed whether or not the programme should contain a definition of the conception of a nation. The Commission came to the conclusion that it was practically impossible to find a definition for the conception “nation” which would satisfy all requirements, and that for the requirements of our fight it is only necessary to have a political definition, so that we may know where we can intervene and where we can not. Of course, everything depends, upon whether or not the working class of the country raises the national question. If the national question is a vital one for the working class, then it is naturally vital for the Communist Party and cannot be neglected.

A further question which was discussed in the Programme Commission was the question of the new form of the bourgeois governments. Fascism was discussed as a form of government on the one hand, and the Workers’ Government on the other. The various types of fascist government were discussed and we

came to the conclusion, that fascism had already developed various national types. For instance, Italian Fascism, its forms of development and forms of government, is not identical with German Fascism, its struggle for development and its methods of wielding power. Hero national differences exist.

The next matter that was discussed was what the next stage after Fascism would be. Various specifications were made. Must Fascism be eliminated directly by the proletarian dictatorship, or could intermediate stages arise? Comrades, the Commission was of the opinion that we cannot prophesy about this question but must leave it open, because various possibilities exist.

Then the question of the intellectuals was discussed. I will not report on this question, since it is a special point on the agenda.

Then on the role of the party, on which subject Comrade Kuusinen spoke. I will mention the following points which arose from this discussion. We all agreed that the conception of the role of the Party as represented in the Communist Manifesto is obsolete and the matter must be changed accordingly.

We had quite a thorough discussion on the question of democratic centralism, especially on the question whether or not we should retain this expression. Certain criticisms were made of this expression from the point of view that it does not sufficiently express the synthesis and harmony of these two conceptions—centralism and democracy; and that it ought to be replaced by a better expression. But after a long discussion on the subject the Commission decided that we must unconditionally retain this expression because it had been clearly and precisely defined, particularly by Comrade Lenin.

The commission also made an analysis of the organisational conceptions which had been put forth by Comrade Rosa Luxemburg. The historical background of these

conceptions were discussed, and the Commission came to the conclusion that these conceptions are now obsolete.

In connection with the question of the Communist parties, another question was discussed—Popular Party and Class Party. This question played a certain role also among the Social-Democrats, who represent themselves as the Popular Party, that is, as the party which unites within itself the working class and all the other toilers. We claimed to be Popular Party, but in an entirely different way. The claims to be the Popular Party in that we, as the revolutionary class party of the proletariat assumed the leadership of the toiling classes. What the Social Democrats and the parties of the Second International consider to be their role as Popular Party is something entirely different. It is the subordination of the interests of the proletariat to the interests of the petty bourgeoisie, and the subordination of the interests of the petty-bourgeoisie to the interests of the large bourgeoisie—in other words, it is partly a reformist, partly a conservative, and partly a reactionary Popular Party.

Another point that was discussed was that of the Communist philosophy. Comrade Bukharin has already spoken in detail on this subject. The only question which was discussed in the Programme Commission was how far must we go into detail in this question. Shall we give a more or less detailed declaration or shall we restrict ourselves to giving a brief and concise statement of the standpoint of the Communist Party in this question. We decided to do the latter and to say at the proper place: “The Communist Party bases itself on the standpoint of dialectic materialism.”

The last point, the strategy and tactical principles, have not yet been discussed in the Commission. One part of the debate has been anticipated here, and the other part will be discussed in the Commission.

In conclusion I will state that in the Programme



Commission it was shown that no fundamental differences exist within the Communist International, that no fundamental differences were expressed in the Programme Commission. Hence Comrade Bukharin and I are of the opinion that this Congress should accept the draft of the programme as outlined here in essentials, and as it will emerge from the Commission, so that it can be sent out as the official draft of the Communist International to all its actions for further consideration, amendment and discussion. When this is done, then either an Enlarged Plenum or the next Congress should definitely adopt the programme in its final form.

Comrade Gebhardt proposed to the Congress on behalf of the Presidium to adjourn the discussion on this point of the agenda until the delegates receive the draft from the Programme Commission.

## **RESOLUTION ON R.C.P. DISCUSSION.**

**The following motion was also received by the Presidium.**

The undersigned delegations speak on behalf of parties which from the beginning followed the Russian Party discussion with the greatest attention and with considerable concern, and which give whole-hearted support to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. They are actuated by the conviction that the proposals of the opposition will imperil the dictatorship of the proletariat and the unity of the Russian Communist Party. Therefore, they maintain that the action of the Russian Communist Party opposition was directed not only against the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, but objectively (irrespective of its subjective intentions) against the interests of the entire Communist

International. For, by imperilling the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Union of Soviet Republics, and by weakening the Russian Communist Party, which alone is capable of maintaining this dictatorship, it attacked the legacy of Lenin which is dear to every Communist throughout the world. Therefore, the Communist International must insist on the unequivocal rejection by all members of the International and by all its sections, of such un-Leninist conceptions, which are contrary to the interests of the old Bolshevik guard, which is not only the leader of the Soviet State, but also of the Comintern.

The Fifth Congress of the Communist International must endorse the decision of the Thirteenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, and must state very emphatically that the views of the Russian Party opposition are petty-bourgeois, opportunistic digressions. We want to emphasise the fact that the Russian question is of great international importance.

If there are delegates who are still of a different opinion, and wish to bring forward different views after Comrade Rykov's report, we move that a discussion on Comrade Rykov's report be opened, to enable members of the Congress who hold different view, to make their standpoint clear. We therefore, propose that a prominent representative of the opposition of the Russian Communist Party, be given two hours to open the discussion.

***Signed by the German, French, British and American delegations.***

This proposal was adopted by the Congress with general approval.



## **Eighteenth Session, June 28th**

**Chairman: KOLAROV.**

**Speakers: RUTH FISCHER, BORDIGA,  
BUKHARIN, THALMANN,  
MACCHI.**

### **Greetings from Delegates from Leningrad Factories.**

Comrade Kolarov declared the session opened and announced that a deputation from the workers of Leningrad had arrived in order to convey the greetings of the proletariat of Leningrad to the Fifth Congress. Comrade Bulygina, who was greeted with enthusiastic applause by the Congress, spoke on behalf of the working women of Leningrad. Comrade Smolin spoke for the men. The Leningrad workers presented a group in bronze to the congress.

Comrade Anisimova presented to the German women leather workers on behalf of the leather-workers of Leningrad a red flag which was received on behalf of the German leather-workers by Comrade Wilde. Comrade Homitsch presented a red flag to the German Delegation on behalf of the rubber-workers in the Treugolnik Factory in Leningrad; this flag is destined for the workers in the aniline and soda factory in Ludwigshafen. Comrade Smolin representing the workers at the Putilov Works, presented a red flag to the workers at Krupps. After the presentation of the flags, the delegates rose and sang the "Internationale." Comrade Thalmann thanked the Leningrad workers on behalf of the German workers for the flags.

## **MANIFESTO ON INDIAN PERSECUTIONS.**

The following protest against the persecution of revolutionaries in India by the British Labour Government was read by Comrade MacManus.

### **Indian Persecutions.**

“A few days after four Communists had been sentenced to four years’ rigorous imprisonment, 111 more arrests were made in India. Most of the men arrested are poor peasants who are charged with carrying on Bolshevik propaganda. They were put on trial on May 15th. The imperialist newspapers did not allow a word about this wholesale persecution to appear in the British press.

The fact of the matter is that unbearable exploitation has driven the Indian poor peasantry to put forth the slogan: Confiscation of Large Estates and Division of Land among the Cultivators.

The MacDonald Government is, therefore, not only permitting the persecution of Indian Communists, but is rushing to the aid of reactionary landlordism as against the militant demands of the rebellious peasantry.

The Fifth World Congress of the Communist International draws the Attention of the World Proletariat and particularly of the working class of Britain to this imperialist policy of the so-called Labour Government and calls for a most energetic protest.

The Fifth World Congress expresses its solidarity with the workers and peasants of India in their struggle against Imperialism—a struggle which has become sharper when a so called Labour Government has become the willing instrument of imperialism. It calls upon the working class of Britain to realise their duty towards these Indian workers and peasants

who are persecuted and enslaved in their name and urges them to make such a protest as will compel the Labour Government to release these prisoners and to put a stop to this campaign of persecution against the Indian working class.

Moved for British Delegation,  
by A. MACMANUS.

### **Statement of Political Commission on Zinoviev Report.**

In the name of the Political Commission, Comrade Ruth Fischer, Germany, spoke on the report of Comrade Zinoviev. She said:

At the request of the Political Commission, Comrade Bordiga handed in a counter-resolution, which, however, was rejected, since it represented an entirely different point of view from the resolution presented by the German, Russian, French, and British delegations. Bordiga attacked not the Right tendencies and digressions, but the Communist International and the E.C.C.I. He seeks the causes of the errors committed in the past not in the Right tendencies in the Communist International, but in the policy of the Executive Committee, and especially in the resolutions of the Fourth World Congress. In his resolution he refers to the delayed intervention of the Executive in the German Question. This is in complete contradiction to the fact. The Commission placed on record that the intervention of the Executive helped essentially to prevent a split and supported the fight against the night tendencies. On the subject of the united front. Comrade Bordiga offers a very diplomatic formula. He divides the question of the united front into a political question, and an economic question, and rejects the economic question entirely.

Comrade Bordiga, moreover, demands that the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government should be entirely abandoned even as an agitational slogan, although the Italian left had only recently adopted this slogan for agitational purposes. The Commission decided to adopt the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government as formulated by Comrade Zinoviev. Comrade Bordiga wants to apply the formation of nuclei and fusion only to the early stages. If he rejects any kind of fusion, it is a bad policy which must be discountenanced. The draft of Comrade Bordiga was rejected, against his own vote, since his resolution would have offered decided support to the Right wing in the Communist International.

Comrade Ruth Fischer then referred to a number of additions which were made to the original draft. The resolution described concretely the errors which were committed by the individual parties. The commission is of the opinion that this resolution represents not only a necessary condition for bringing this question to an end, but was also a condition for our future work. The Commission asked that the attacks made by Comrade Bordiga in the Commission against the Executive by his resolution, be rejected and that the resolution lying before the Congress be adopted and acted upon accordingly.

Bordiga: Ruth Fischer, in the name of the Commission, has just spoken with admirable vigour against the Italian extreme left. Her vigour is indeed, astonishing in view of her reputation for being an ardent leftist, particularly in the struggles which have just taken place in our German Party. She exaggerated the extent of our attitude by lending it the character of a fight against the whole International and against the Executive Committee.

It is true that we maintain the position we held at the last Congress, but the International have made a step in our direction. This authorises us to maintain our position as long as it is compatible with discipline, i.e., until the vote of the

Congress is taken.

We have adopted this revolutionary criticism in all sincerity. That is why we regret that the comrades of the German left, state that we are helping the Right. Nevertheless we shall stick to our resolution until the vote of the Congress.

**Comrade Bukharin:** Bordiga says that he will defend the Marxist view-point against the opportunism of the Executive. But I must say that Bordiga himself has revisionist tendencies of a peculiar form. Whatever Marx may have said, he never let the masses out of sight. This cannot be said of Bordiga and his followers. We Marxists have learned from Marx, and even from Lasalle, that, the victory of the working class rests on its capacity to set large masses into motion against the State apparatus of the bourgeoisie. In Russia we had people who shared the viewpoint of this Bordigian comrade. But they were not the Bolsheviks, but the Socialist Revolutionists, the worst enemies of Marxism. As far as the proletariat is concerned, the might of the masses compensates for the lack of other fighting means.

Comrade Bordiga referred to our pessimism, although his and his followers' conception is not exactly optimistic. Their theses contained the following statement: "It is a childish delusion to believe that we can bring the masses over to our side while fascism is in power.

What we say is: we must win over the majority of the proletariat, the more the better. The logical deduction of Comrade Bordiga's and his followers' viewpoint is: the less the better. And this is supposed to be the basis of the so-called "left opposition" of the Comintern, which is to save the International from opportunistic tendencies.

Comrade Bordiga and the Bordigians are, in a certain sense, good revolutionists. But we are compelled to tell them that what they are doing here is bound to have dire consequences. They already begin to use very dangerous terms,

especially in connection with international discipline. We must fight very energetically against Bordiga's viewpoint, as we want to have in Italy a victory, not a defeat, a mass party and not a small heroic sect. In Italy, too, victory can only be achieved with the masses on our side. Therefore, we advocate, as opposed to his little groups' position, a revolutionary mass organisation of the proletariat, capable, under good leadership to bring the Italian proletariat to the final victory. (Applause.)

Thalmann (Germany): We have two drafts before us. The first was adopted after many hours' discussion in the political commission, Bordiga voting against it. Comrade Radek also voted against it. And this was natural enough, because he has fundamentally a different point of view. The second draft is Comrade Bordiga's draft. The German delegation is of opinion that this draft has been drawn up in a remarkably diplomatic manner, and fails to make the contradictions, which it involves, clear.

Bordiga declares that he does not entirely reject the application of united front tactics, but is of the opinion that a distinction must be made between the economic and the political united front. This reminds me of the attitude of certain trade union leaders who take the line that economics and politics do not go together. We cannot adopt this counter-revolutionary trade union theory as a Communist theory.

The question of the united front tactics in Italy is a complicated but an important question. If the maximalists in the Socialist Party are neglected and no attempt is made to win over this mass of workers for the proletarian revolution by separating them from the Socialist Party, it will be a mistake.

It is also a mistake to reject the formation of nuclei as Bordiga does.

With regard to the slogan of the workers' government, Bordiga rejects this even as a method of agitation in the sense in which it has been defined at this Congress. He is of the



opinion that the dictatorship of the proletariat is weakened by the use of this synonym. We have had specially gloomy experiences with this slogan in Germany because the tactics and politics of our Central Committee with its tendency to the right, gave it a meaning of their own, and discredited it in the eyes of the people—one has only to think of Saxony to see this. There are many other capitalistic countries where this slogan could play a great part in agitation. In the meaning which the world Congress now attaches to it, it can perform great services, especially outside Europe in winning over the masses of the proletariat for the Communist Party.

The theses of Comrade Bordiga show quite clearly that the Italian Party has not yet clearly defined its position on the questions of organisation and discipline.

At the Conference of Federation Secretaries held at the end of May, Comrade Bordiga, declared that if the Fifth Congress of the Communist International did not adopt his line, he would organise a left fraction against the wishes of the International.

Here we must speak seriously with Comrade Bordiga. If one section of the Communist International considers it necessary to go against the whole tactics of the International, and a left fraction is to be formed against the Executive, then Comrade Bordiga must at least tell us clearly and definitely here what he meant by this, and how he proposes to carry it out in practice. The Executive has often had to form a left fraction in various sections, but this was to intensify the struggle against opportunism, and to carry out the decisions of the Congress. It did so from political revolutionary necessity. There is no comparison between such a case and the formation of a left fraction against the Executive.

He makes an appeal to the German workers, believing that there is a possibility of forming a wing in the International and especially in the German Party since the October defeat, which will unite itself to his political conceptions. I have been asked

to declare in the name of the German delegation that, we are unanimously in agreement with the draft of the commission's resolutions and that we do not accept Comrade Bordiga's theses. We appeal to all the sections of the International to reject Comrade Bordiga's draft, especially for political reasons, and also because fascism in Italy is undermined, and Mussolini's position is beginning to be insecure, so that a consolidated Communist Party within the framework of the Communist International is particularly necessary at this moment. It must not be mere sect with a purely political programme, but a Bolshevik mass party. For this reason, the German delegation takes the view that a very definite attitude must be adopted towards the conceptions of Comrade Bordiga, and it makes the following declaration with regard to the draft resolutions of the Italian left: "The German delegation is opposed to the resolution submitted by the Italian left.

With regard to the question of the workers' and peasants' government, the Italian left wishes to reject this slogan even for purposes of agitation, because it is said to weaken the conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This danger does not exist, as the Congress has expressly explained that the workers' and peasants' government is only to be interpreted as a method of agitation for the Soviet dictatorship.

The tactics of fusion with other Communist organisations, of forming nuclei in other parties, and of accepting sympathising parties is rejected on the ground that these tactics are only useful when the International is still in process of formation. Against this argument, it must be pointed out that in a number of important countries, the Comintern has still to create real Bolshevik parties, so that the tactics proposed by the Italian left are in opposition to the interests of the Comintern and of the revolutionary movement. In Italy, particularly, we believe while giving full recognition of the great revolutionary achievements of the Italian Communist

Party, that it will become a real mass Communist Party only when a fusion with the sincere supporters of the Third International in the Italian Socialist Party has been produced, and when the Communist nuclei of this united party is secure in its leadership.

The German delegation calls upon the Italian left to support this fight which is being carried on in common by the Russian, the German, the French and other parties, with all its energy. It expects the Italian life, and Comrade Bordiga in particular, to carry out the decisions of the Congress, not merely formally, but with full conviction, in accordance with their declaration at the Plenum. It expects them not to sabotage the fusion with the maximalists and no longer to refuse to take part in party work in the leading workers' organisations.

**Comrade Bordiga:** Comrade Bukharin based his remarks on an article published in an official organ of our party, an organ no longer controlled by the tendency which I represent. The article was written on the author's own responsibility. To understand the opinion of the left fraction one should read the articles signed by those of our comrade, who also signed the theses expressing the left point of view.

It is a contradiction to announce on the one hand that we are anti-Marxist, terrorist, petty-bourgeois, and pseudo-anarchist, and on the other hand to summon us at a decisive historical moment, to direct the proletarian movement in Italy. I do not consider this method of discussion worthy of the revolutionary international. In conclusion, I am sorry to have to say that everything we have heard here, in this ardent debate on the resolution proposed by us, has only confirmed us in our absolute conviction that we did right in acting as we did.

**Comrade Bukharin:** I would like briefly to make the following declaration. Even if the article quoted was not written by Comrade Bordiga, it is nevertheless a symptom of the mental atmosphere produced by Comrade Bordiga in the

Italian Party. For this reason the passages which I have quoted are a good argument against the politics of Comrade Bordiga. Besides, Comrade Bordiga did not say one word to disavow the opinions expressed in that article. This can be proven by various statements made by Bordiga himself. I believe that the last declaration of Comrade Bordiga was as diplomatic as the previous one.

**Comrade Bordiga:** Comrade Bukharin has surrounded himself with a heap of Italian newspapers, underlined, black, red, blue, etc.—but the texts which he has quoted are simply the resume of a report of our conference. This first report was not drawn up by me and the resume which has been made of it has entirely misrepresented my view.

The meaning of my declaration on the subject of discipline was simply this: if the International moves yet further to the right, we shall find it necessary to form within the International a left fraction. I never said anything except this.

Comrade Macchi declared that he, a member of the delegation of the French Party, in which he serves as organiser of the immigrant Italian Communists who are now in the French Party, on personal conviction supports the draft submitted by the Italian left wing, and that he thereby expresses the opinion of the aforesaid Italian comrades.

The Congress then took a vote on the resolution. The resolution submitted by the Commission was carried by a majority of all against eight, no one abstaining.

Then Session then closed.



# Nineteenth Session, June ( Evening) 28th

Presidium: ZINOVIEV, KOLAROV, GEBHARDT,  
KATAYAMA.

Speaker: COMRADE RYKOV.

## THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF SOVIET RUSSIA.

### The Principal Idea of Nep.

The Session was attended by numerous representatives of factory nuclei of the R.C.P.

Comrade Rykov was called upon to make his report.

Comrades; At the Fourth Congress, Comrade Lenin and Trotsky spoke on the Russian question. Unfortunately, Comrade Lenin is not with us now. Had he been with us, he would have shown much more favourable facts and indicated much greater achievements. than were possible at the Fourth Congress.

Comrade Lenin at the Fourth Congress outlined the Party's point of view with regard to the new economic policy; he dealt with the causes which induced us to turn away from the period of war Communism towards the new economic policy and outlined the principles upon which it was based. For the sake of clarity, I will just go over the main postulates which Comrade Lenin laid down.

He said: "... In 1921, after we had passed through all the most important stages of the civil war, successfully, we came

up against a great—I consider one of the greatest—internal crises in Soviet Russia. This internal crisis revealed the dissatisfaction not only of a considerable section of the peasantry, but also of the workers. It was the first and I hope it will be the last time in the history of Soviet Russia that large masses of peasantry, not consciously but intuitively, were hostile to us.

What was the cause of this peculiar and to us naturally unpleasant situation? The reason was that we went too far in our economic attack. We advanced without making our base secure. ...”

He said further:

“ .... The direct transition to purely Socialist forms and to purely Socialist distribution is too much for our strength and if we are unable to carry out a retreat and limit ourselves to a more easy task, then we are threatened with doom...”

A little prior to this period, we had the mutiny in Kronstadt, which had in its political aspect was a reflection of the discontent which had accumulated among the peasantry during the period of war Communism. In the opinion of Comrade Lenin, the central point of the new economic policy was to give the peasant the right of free trade and the right freely to dispose of the product of his labour.

We may consider that now, at this Fifth Congress of the Comintern, the fundamental principles of the new economic policy have been put into effect. A few months ago, a law was issued on the uniform agricultural tax, which is based entirely upon the circulation of money. We have eliminated from the relations between the peasant and the State the last trace of barter relations and we completely construct our relations towards the peasantry on the basis of free commodity circulation. All fiscal relations between the State and the peasantry from this year are limited to fiscal relations in the money form.

## **Review of the Economic Policy.**

To summarise the economic position of Soviet Russia at the present moment, means to summarise the results of the new economic policy during the last three years. The subject in itself is immense, for that reason I must limit myself to three most important spheres of our economic activity: (1) Industry and the position of the working class; (2) Agriculture; (3) Circulation of commodities and circulation of money. For the purposes of comparison, we take pre-war figures. As a matter of fact, pre-war relations cannot in any sense be regarded as ideal and as a standard towards which the activity of the Party and the Socialist State should be directed. We made the October revolution in order to change the pre-October relations and figures, and to establish such relations as would completely justify the dictatorship of the working class. I have no doubt that within the next few years, we will estimate our successes not from the point of view of what has been, but from the point of view of the achievement of the aims which we set ourselves for the next three, five or ten years.

At the present moment, our system of planned production, unfortunately, has not reached that stage of perfection. Consequently, I must use pre-war figures for comparisons.

## **State of Industry, and Conditions of the Working Class.**

I take up the principal question, the question of industry and the conditions of the working class. The fundamental figures indicate that at the present time we have approximately 45 per cent. of pre-war industry. The figure in itself is not large. I read Comrade Varga's report, and I must say that the position in the majority of capitalist countries is much better. Taken absolutely, this figure is not in the least consoling, but it

assumes an entirely different character when we take into consideration the dynamics of the development of our industry.

### **The Dynamics of our Industry.**

In 1920, we had altogether 15 per cent. of pre-war industry. From that figure we rose to 45 per cent. this year; we trebled it. This is not so bad. Although we still lag behind many bourgeois countries, nevertheless, we are progressing much faster than any bourgeois West European country. If we continue to develop at the same rate, then in the course of the next few years I hope we will not only reach, but overtake the West European countries. This growth is proceeding at a progressive rate, i.e., each year brings a greater increase than the preceding year.

### **The Light Industry.**

The growth of industry is not proceeding equally in all branches, The light industry is developing much faster than the heavy industries. Several branches of the light industry have reached the pre-war level. Taken as a whole, the industry exceeds 50 per cent. of pre-war. Thus, the electrotechnical industry has reached 90 per cent. pre-war, the linen industry baa almost reached pre-war level.

In order to show the rate of development in various branches of industry, I will quote the cotton spinning industry: in 1920, the output of cotton yarn was 1,000,000 poods, at present it is 5,000,000 poods. Our equipment in this industry guarantees us the possibility of further expansion, the limit of which is determined solely by the capacity of the market and the amount of working capital we can obtain. The example of



the cotton industry is not the only one that could be quoted in the light industry producing for consumption. During the past year its development has shown a rapidly rising curve.

### **The Heavy Industry.**

The position in the heavy industry is not so good. With regard to the mining and the metallurgical industries, for a long time we relied on the stocks of ores and metals which were left to us from the old times, and consequently there was not immediate necessity to develop this branch of industry. Only in recent times was a shortage of metals and ores felt. The development of metallurgy may be seen from the following figures: the output of pig-iron rose from 7,000,000 poods in 1920-21 to 35,000,000 poods this year. The increase took place at the following rate: in the first year of the new economic policy, the output of pig-iron increased by 3,000,000 poods, in the second year there was an increase of 8,000,000 poods, and according to the preliminary figures this year the increase should amount to 20,000,000 more poods than last year. This rate of increase is rather rapid, but the absolute output we have achieved up till now is very insignificant.

### **Our Successes in Mineral Fuel.**

Much greater successes have been achieved in the sphere of mineral fuel.

All those who have lived for some time in Russia, are aware of the severe fuel crisis, the fuel famine we experienced prior to and after October, They will know also that during the last year or so, there is no sign of a fuel crisis in the Union of Soviet Republics. On the contrary, we have a surplus of

mineral fuel, and are beginning to export it abroad. The fuel balance of the Republic has changed. A larger proportion of mineral fuel than wood fuel is used in the country. We have a surplus of petroleum at the present moment and export of petroleum products abroad is approaching the pre-war level.

In describing the features of the industrial position, I have not used all the statistics. Nevertheless, these statistics show that up to the present year, we have not achieved the successes that are necessary, but every month, every year we are accelerating the development of industry.

### **Improvement in the Financial Condition of Industry.**

This growth in the productivity of industry has resulted in the improvement of its financial condition, and I think that now we have got such a good run, that we shall continue our advance with unslackening speed.

While the majority of our trusts formerly worked at a loss, or at an entirely insignificant profit, this situation has now changed, and in the course of the business year 1922-23 the state income from industry amounted to about twenty million gold roubles.

During the present year this amount this considerably increased and according to preliminary figures we will receive no less than 40,000,000 gold roubles which may be counted in the State budget as clear profit from industry. This means that in the realm of finance our industry is not only on its feet, but has already begun to furnish appreciable profit.

I recall that in his report at the Fourth Congress, Comrade Lenin declared that we had already accumulated 20 million roubles, but in that 20 millions he included the receipts from foreign trade, the profits of the banks, and the entire income from industry. At the present time we have 40,000,000 roubles

profit in our budget from industry alone. The greater part of this amount goes back into industry for the purpose of increasing its turnover capital, and its further development.

Our balance of foreign trade is about 100 million roubles in our favour. I have no figures at hand on the profits from our banks. But in any case, the figure now is incomparably greater than that which was brought to our attention by Comrade Lenin at the Fourth Congress.

### **Condition of the Working Class.**

The improvement in industry is naturally reflected in an improved condition in the working class, who hold in their hands the political power of the Union of Soviet Republics. The working class during the last three years has increased numerically and at the same time its material condition has improved in direct proportion to the improvement in industry. However, I hope that the members of the Comintern will not have the impression that we consider the condition of the working class at the present ideal, or even good. We recognise that we have not yet accomplished even that minimum which is necessary. But each year we are able to make a certain improvement and we shall continue this improvement in the future.

### **Growth of the Working Class.**

The working class have grown numerically in proportion to the expansion of industry. Thus, in the middle of 1922, it was 1,260,000. Now it numbers 1,600,000. This does not include the railroad workers of whom there are about a million—800,000 permanent workers, and 200,000 casual labourers.

Neither does it include the proletariat in warehouses and offices, the educational workers, nor that mass of workers intermittently employed in lumbering, on peat cutting, etc. The figures I have cited include only those groups of workers who are concentrated as permanent workers in our factories and workshops.

In order to give a more accurate picture of the numerical increase of the workers. I will cite figures for the main branches of industry. Between November, 1922 and February, 1924, the number of workers in the fuel industry increased from 151,654 to 207,747; in the metal industry from 246,750 to 281,691; and in the textile industry from 312,000 to 374,000. This growth of the number of workers engaged in industry is continuing at the present time, thus the textile industry in the course of the year has increased its production by approximately 30 per cent. There has been a proportionate increase in the number of workers employed. As a whole the number of workers engaged in government industry has increased during the last fifteen months by 20 per cent.

### **Unemployment.**

Together with this increase in the number of workers occupied in industry, we are also confronted with an increase in the number of unemployed registered on the Labour Exchange. The number of unemployed has attained about a million. There have been months when the number has even exceeded that amount.

Unemployment is one of the most distressing phenomena in Russia at the present time, and we must take every measure to abolish it. Of the entire number of unemployed, about 25 per cent., are industrial workers, and the remainder is made up of the intelligentsia, the professions, office workers, and unskilled

labourers. I must admit that I personally do not place complete confidence in the official statistics of the Labour Exchange, because of the fact that all kinds of people are registered on the exchange for the sake of receiving those privileges for the unemployed and those conditions of hire which are guaranteed by the laws of the Soviet Republic, and which are flexibly carried out. Here are registered every kind of unemployed artist, singer, and the innumerable class of the so-called "Soviet Miss." Here are registered not only those who are looking for work, but those who would not accept work, and are merely looking for the privileges and exemptions which are connected with the category of unemployment. We have constantly discovered cases where people who have been arrested and sentenced to Pechora (a place of exile—to Archangel) on the charge of speculation, have been registered on the Labour Exchange as unemployed. Therefore, in my opinion the official figures probably exceed the actual number of the unemployed. But in general, we must take cognisance of the growth of the number of unemployed, which goes parallel with the growth of the number of workers occupied in industry.

This is due to the fact that a migration from the country to the city has commenced. During the period of war Communism a great number of workers fled from the cities to the villages, and as long as conditions of the workers were bad they remained there.

I recall that at that time we had to devise measures to bring back those workers who had fled to the country into the factories and workshops.

The second reason for the growth of unemployment is to be found in certain very excellent measures undertaken by us which unfortunately, have not been carried out with sufficient severity, namely, cutting down the staffs of every soviet, industrial, trade, co-operative and other similar institutions.

This measure had led to a certain amount of unemployment

among those sections of the intelligentsia and the petty bourgeoisie from whom the office workers are recruited.

Thus, in the statistics which I have presented, the industrial workers only make up one-fourth. Offices and government employees and the unskilled labourers make up the rest.

### **Combating Unemployment.**

What are the chief measures which must be taken to solve unemployment? In my opinion, the chief measures should be a still faster development of industry than has taken place until this time. It has developed fast, but we must speed it up still more. And if we should have more means to spend in combating unemployment, my proposal would be to use them first of all, to start the idle factories going, to provide work for the unemployed.

The question of unemployment and the fight against it is now on the order of the day in all our Soviet and Party organs. In order to complete this description of the composition of the class of unemployed, I must point out still another source of unemployment, namely, the demobilisation of the army which we conducted this spring. The majority of the demobilised soldiers of the Red Army have remained in the cities and registered with the Labour Exchange. Help is extended to the unemployed at the present time from the insurance funds which according to the law receive a sum equal to 18 per cent. of wages paid for all kinds of insurance. The Councils of People's Commissars in the Ukraine, in the R.S.F.S.R., and in other republics, have set aside a special (though not very large) fund for the organisation of public work. The local Soviet executive committees are doing the same thing in many places. But the chief measure of assistance is the policy of our party, in the direction of extending out industry.

### **The Increase of Wages.**

Such is the condition of the working class numerically. I will not dwell on the length of the working day and the protection of labour, because in these fields we have the best labour legislation in the world. Thanks to the control on the part of the unions and the factory committees this legislation is carried out with the greatest exactitude. The only question which remains for me to discuss in connection with the workers is that of wages. The wages at the present time, if we measure them according to purchasing power, have attained from 65-70 per cent. of the pre-war level. These figures do not include a great number of services in kind, and exemptions on municipal service received by the workers in the factories and cities; 70 per cent. of the pre-war level—or even a little less—is, of course, insufficient. But in the course of the last two years the wages have increased by 250 per cent. During the last year and a half, that is to say, since the last Congress of the Comintern, they have increased from 40 per cent. of the pre-war level to 65.70 per cent. This means that during this period the increase has kept pace with the growth of industry. In the course of the next three months wages will be raised in the two branches of labour most backward in this respect, namely, the railroad workers, and the textile workers, and in the case of the textile industry they will be raised to the level of the wages in other industries. In both cases the average increase in the wages, will be about 10 per cent. Furthermore, in certain separate trusts and factories of the textile industry the wages already exceed the pre-war level.

But this by no means indicates that the wage situation is entirely favourable. We consider it necessary at the present time to raise the wages, in the textile, industry above, the pre-war level, inasmuch as in pre-war times the textile workers received lower wages than the workers in any other branch of

industry.

The increase of wages during the months just preceding the Fifth Comintern Congress proceeded at a somewhat slower pace than before, and I must point out that this occurred with the consent of the workers themselves. During those months the party and the government were occupied with carrying out the financial reform. The money reform demanded and still demands the utmost cutting down of our expenditures, and also that we curtail the issue of money as far as possible, and keep the amount within the limits necessary to secure it from depreciation. The period of financial reform should be considered as a period, of manifestation of a high degree of consciousness on the part of the working class, who were willing to make a great number of sacrifices for the sake of guaranteeing the stability of our currency—this is the greatest triumph of the present year.

### **The Productivity of Labour is Increasing.**

In order to conclude the question of our industry, I will point out one cardinal fact that is decisive for any economist in estimating how healthy was the growth of industry for the past period. I refer to the increase in output. The number of men engaged in industry has increased during the last year, but the volume of products has grown in much greater proportion. This means that the productivity of labour has increased and that the very organisation of our industry has improved.

However, I am far from admitting that we have fully solved the problem of increasing the productivity of labour. I think that the achievements in this field can and must be considerably extended.



## **The Role of Internal Private Capital in Industry.**

A comrade from the Communist International asked me how important was the role of private capital in industry in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. I will quote only one figure to illustrate this question., The production of private firms only amounts to four per cent. of the total production of our industry. The factories in the hands of private capitalists have employed, on average, no more than seventeen hands each. This means that the part played by private capital in the industrial field is quite negligible and there can be no danger from private enterprise here.

As far as river, sea and railway transport is concerned, the whole 100 per cent, are in the hands of the State.

The improvement in industry, the figures of which I gave you, concerns State enterprises exclusively, and it takes place without any aid from foreign countries, exclusively on the resources of the republic itself on the basis of the Socialist accumulation that has proceeded during the last four years.

## **Deterioration of Equipment.**

I cannot conceal our weak points, and deficiencies from the Comintern, and our weakest side in the economic front is the fact that our equipment has deteriorated considerably. We do not possess sufficient means to restore the capital in our industry or the methods of production considerably. The process of the growth in industry took place with the equipment in those factories and mills we inherited from the capitalist society and Tsarist regime. We have not built any large factories during the last few years, and only now for the first time are we engaged in building factories equipped with the machines designed according to the last word in technique,

and again they are only in those branches of industry of second rate importance, such as glass, chemical, timber, etc. trades. They will be opened shortly. As a whole, up till now we have been working with those machines that we inherited from the Tsarist regime.

### **Electrification.**

Electrification is, mainly, all that is new that we have introduced to improve our industry. We are not advancing as rapidly as is necessary, and as we projected a few years ago. Next year, the following new stations will be opened: the Volkhov, electric power station with a capacity of 55,000 kilowatts, the Schatour station with a capacity of 32,000 kilowatts; Nijgorod station with 20,000 kilowatts capacity; the Shterov station with a power of 20,000 kilowatts, and number of other electrical power stations of small capacity. In 1924 we were able to assign a sum of nearly 51 million roubles for the purpose of electrification.

### **We are Existing at the Expense of Internal Accumulation.**

The last congress of the party carried a resolution stating that it is necessary to increase the rate of development of the metal industry and electrification of the country. But I must state that this increase has its limits in the amount of accumulation that takes place in Russia. Until now we have been restoring our industry under the blockade of bourgeois countries. We are negotiating with MacDonald in the same way as we negotiated before with Lloyd George, and with similar success up to the present time. That is to say, we have not yet signed an agreement and do not observe any desire on the part

of the other party to come to a fixed agreement with us on the basis of granting this a loan and investing the free capital of Western Europe in the development of our industry.

We are in exactly the same relations with other countries. We have not received a cent. loan from them, and have been improving our industry exclusively by the efforts of the workers and peasants.

### **Concessions.**

This accumulation is sufficiently rapid: it proceeds, increasingly year by year, and enabled us at the last Congress to carry a resolution that now we can be more discriminate in granting concessions. Consequently, we will be more careful in granting concessions to MacDonald than we were to Urquhart, although the former is a member of the Second International and Urquhart is not. We will be more careful in negotiating with Mac-Donald because we are advancing sufficiently rapidly with the development of our own internal forces. However, I do not wish to say that we are against granting concessions: if it is profitable we will grant it, if not we shall refuse. Now, we will examine the benefits or disadvantages we receive from concessions much more carefully than we did before. We have raised the standard of our demands.

### **Agriculture and the Peasantry.**

The Union of Socialist Republics is one of the most agrarian countries in Europe; the peasantry and agriculture predominate over industry. Out of one hundred and thirty millions population, over hundred millions are peasants. The characteristic feature of our agriculture is that it is formed of

small units, the peasant farm. Of all the land confiscated during the October revolution—amounting, as near as I can remember, to 30,000,000 desyatin, (desyatin, 2.2 acres), nearly all was distributed among the peasants.

### **Model Farms.**

About 2 million desyatins of good and bad land were retained in the hands of the government, and were intended to be used for organising model farms, seed nurseries, horse breeding farm, etc., etc.

The main function of these model farms consists in teaching the villagers with concrete examples how to achieve improved methods of agriculture and to help the peasant to improve his farm and give him better quality seeds, pedigree cattle, etc.

### **The State of Peasants' Farming.**

The basis of agriculture, its working nucleus is the peasant farm. There are from 18 to 20 million independent agricultural units working on a basis of free commodity exchange. During the period of revolution and civil war, the peasant farms were considerably destroyed, but much less than industry. Nevertheless, the area under cultivation was considerably reduced. During the period of war Communism our relations to agriculture were based on the monopoly of the corn trade and on the tax in kind. No one could sell corn except the state and its organs. The peasantry was obliged to transfer all surplus grain to the state except that which was required for his own use; for seed and supplying his needs in food. Incidentally our legislation defined what was to be considered as necessary for

the peasant's farm. At the same time masses of peasants were mobilised in the army. During the civil war we had an army of 5½ million men which was formed mostly of peasants and farm workers. The Whites concurrently were mobilising the peasants in those parts of the country that they occupied. On the one hand the peasants were weakened by the withdrawal of labour power, and on the other hand by the requisitioning of cattle for military requirements. The front nearly reached Moscow, and every new advance meant requisitions from the peasants, now by Kolchak, now by Denikin, now by other armies. They requisitioned corn, cattle and even household utensils.

At the same time the system of requisitions which left the peasant only sufficient for his consumption, no matter how much he produced, deprived him of all incentive to develop his farm. Consequently, the introduction of the new economic policy under which the peasant owns all he produces and pays the state a definite tax, was an enormous lever for improving our peasant agriculture. Therefore, the fundamental service of the new economic policy was that it strengthened the union of the peasantry and the working class.

If you look through the chronicles of the epoch of war Communism, you will find records of mass protest among the peasantry against the measures used. We had at that time partial risings in several goubernias. The new economic policy established the union of the workers and peasants and entirely put an end to peasant risings. Of course, the famine of 1921 was a severe blow to the peasants.

### **Revival of Peasant Agriculture.**

In 1922, the area under cultivation was particularly curtailed, this was the result of the severe failure of the harvest

in 1921. As compared with pre-war times, the curtailment of the area under cultivation in 1922 amounted to 12 per cent., in 1921 to 22 per cent., and in 1922 to 24 per cent. A change for the better started after the year 1922. At the present time, the area under cultivation is somewhere between 85 and 90 per cent. of pre-war.

In connection with this increase of the area under cultivation, the peasants have increased their agricultural output to such an extent that partly it caused the so-called autumn crisis, with which I 'will deal later on. At this point I will merely say that in regard to the peasantry, this crisis manifested itself in a disproportionate reduction of prices of the peasants' corn.

The reduction of prices was due to the fact that the surplus product of peasant agriculture turned out to be, in excess of the requirements of the town and of the working class. After covering all requirements, we had in the Republic a surplus of more than 200,000,000 poods of corn., Consequently, the only way to encourage the peasantry to increase the area under cultivation and to improve the method of agriculture, is to find an outside market for the sale of the peasants' produce. We have not two intersecting lines—our peasantry culture and our industries—but a triangle, in which our foreign trade with Western Europe forms the apex, without which we cannot establish the equilibrium between our industry and the peasant agriculture, which is necessary for the rapid development of our agriculture. Already in the current year, we have exported about 118,000,000 poods of grain, out of the harvest of 1923. This enabled us to raise the price of grain by more than 60 per cent. and to equalise it throughout the territory of the Union, thus bringing up the lower, blade of the "scissors," which represent agriculture to the upper blade which represents the crisis of industrial products.

To conclude with the revival of agriculture, I will quote the

figures relating to the area under cotton cultivation. In 1922 we had about 55,000 desyatins (in Turkestan und Transcaucasia), in 1923 the area increased to 200,000 desyatins, which meant all increase of nearly four times, and finally, in 1924 the area was doubled again and brought up, to 400,000 desyatins. Nevertheless, regardless of such a rapid pace in the reconstruction of the cotton plantations, we have so far reached hardly more than half of the pre-war area, and even in the current year, in order to satisfy the requirements of our textile industry, we are compelled to import approximately as much foreign cotton as we had harvested here.

### **This Year's Agricultural Prospects.**

A burning topic of the day is the question of this year's harvest. No official communications have yet appeared in the press on this subject. Even now I am going to quote figures which have not yet been finally revised, yet on the whole they furnish a quite reliable characteristic of the state of affairs.

The harvest is of cardinal importance in the economic system of the Union of Republics, taking into consideration the low level of our peasant agriculture, which depends largely all the weather and on climatic conditions. The area of cultivation this year, as I have already pointed out, is larger than that of the preceding year, yet this year's harvest, according to preliminary estimates, will be just equal to last year's harvest. If it is equal in the aggregate, it means a lower rate of fertility per desyatin, because the area was larger this year as compared with last year.

Thus, in the current year, 1923-24, after covering all our home requirements, we shall be able to export approximately the same amount of grain as last year, approximately 200,000,000 poods.

The peculiar feature of this year's harvest is its uneven character over the country as compared with last year. We have a good crop in Siberia, around Moscow—in the central region, but we have a repetition of the bad harvest in a whole number of districts which were smitten by famine in 1921, i.e., in the Volga German province, in the Tsaritsin goubernia, in parts of Saratov, Stavropol, etc. By its size the area of the bad harvest comprises little less than one-fifth of the district which was smitten with harvest failure in 1921. In intensity it is about the same as it was last time.

### **Aid to the Bad Harvest Regions.**

The Central Committee of the Party and the Council of People's Commissaries, fully convinced that the country has all the means this year to prevent a repetition of the calamities in the bad harvest regions deems it necessary to start immediately on the work of aiding the peasantry. The first task is to retain the area under cultivation in the bad harvest regions, and the Government has already taken steps to prevent the curtailment of cultivation next year by a single desyatin. We are now able to do so without any particular strain on the State, and without any appeal to the A.R.A. and other outside organisations. In the autumn we shall have to supply twenty million poods of seeds to the peasantry in the bad harvest regions for their winter sowing, which will constitute a small quantity in view of the surplus of 200,000,000 poods for export. Orders have already been given to dispatch grain into the bad harvest districts, and measures have already been instituted for an organised sowing campaign in the autumn, which starts in these districts in the end of August. But on the whole, the fact that throughout the territory of the Union we have a reduced rate of fertility, aggravated by extremely bad harvests in some districts, affects



considerably our previous calculations for a record economic year, in the year of a rapid ascent of the whole of our economic system; because the preliminary estimates of fertility were highly favourable and we figured on a surplus of 400 to 500 million poods of surplus grain for export. This program is now being curtailed. In regard to agriculture, the coming year will bear the same feature as the year just passed, that is, it will be a satisfactory year on the whole.

### **Questions of Commodity Circulation.**

I now come to the question which served as one of the causes of the discussion in the Party, to the question of the crisis and of the ways and means devised by the C.C. of the Party for overcoming it.

One of the delegates to the Comintern Congress told me in private conversation that it was high time to absolve the Comintern from listening to the question of crises in Soviet Russia. I told the comrade that I fully concurred in his wish. If the Comintern could show us how to do it, we would immediately carry it out and at the time appointed. But the comrade could not give me such a recipe.

I am afraid that there is no such recipe in nature which could ensure our economy against any crisis. The reason for this I will give presently. Meanwhile I shall deal with the conditions which caused the autumn crisis and with the measures by which it was overcome.

### **The Autumn Crisis.**

The distinguishing feature of this crisis was the curtailed circulation of commodities, the depression of the market, at the

very season when all conditions should have warranted an increased impetus in the circulation of commodities. This was caused by the phenomenon of the wide discrepancy between the prices of agricultural produce and industrial products (“the scissors”).\* This discrepancy reached its highest pitch in October, when difference between industrial prices as compared with agricultural was more than three times greater than before the war.

Thanks to this discrepancy of prices, our industries were confronted with an extremely shrunken market for the sale of their products.

During the first 18 months under the new economic policy, our industries grew chiefly by supplying the requirements of the internal market of the towns, catering to the needs of the factory workers, and the urban population in general. The town was rich enough to set industry growing in the course of the first 18 months. The wages of workers and employees increased at the corresponding rate to the growing prices, thereby sustaining the purchasing power of the urban market. Until the autumn of last year, the town consumed 70 per cent. of the whole output of our industries, and only 30 per cent. went to the villages.

Our industries grow and gained strength on the basis of the town market, but the latter soon became overstocked and the further extension of sales could be effected only in the peasant market. Under such conditions, the first essential condition for the conquest of the peasant market for our manufactured goods was to put on a level the respective prices of the manufactured goods and agricultural produce, i.e., to reduce the prices on the former and to raise them on the latter.

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\* This situation illustrated on a chart represents two intersecting lines like the blades of an open pair of scissors, and was so described by Trotsky at the Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.

When comrades abroad read about our discussion on the crisis, I am afraid they thought that we were closing our factories and discharging our workers, that our industrial organisations were heading for bankruptcy. I must say that during the crisis and the discussion about the crisis, far from there being a closing of factories and a wholesale discharging of workers, there was rather a steady increase, both as to the extent of the output and the number of workers employed. The discussion of the crisis by our party and the measures for the overcoming of the crisis, were undertaken well in time to prevent any ruinous consequences which, if allowed to extend, threatened us with the severest shock to the whole of our economic system.

As a result of the measures taken (on the one hand, large purchases of grain for export by the State, which soon increased the price of grain by more than 50 per cent., and on the other hand, the reduction of prices on the products of the State industries, which amounted on the average to 25 per cent.) a correlation of prices was reached which enabled our industries to effect larger sales in the peasant market, and already in February our stock exchanges recorded a revival of trade and an extension of commodity circulation which were unknown during the best months which preceded the crisis.

Since January-February this year we have a correlation of prices far more favourable to agriculture than was anticipated by our State Planning Commission at the appearance of the first symptoms of the crisis.

The basis of our autumn crisis consisted of the lack of co-ordination and proportion between the respective development of agriculture and industry, and also the very low level of our industry.

The discrepancy was not produced by us. It was bequeathed to us by pre-revolutionary Russia and was the product of centuries of our past history.

During this period of transition to the Socialist society, under our conditions, we must promote the growth of the working class, its numbers, its organisation and class-consciousness and its experience in the management of industry, and this, together with the development of industry, would enable us to pass from the transition period into the Socialist society. Along with this process will come the reduction of the discrepancy between the respective development of agriculture and industry.

### **The Market.**

The possibility of crisis is enhanced further by the insufficient organisation of our market, and by the obstacles which stand in the way of organising it. Under war Communism our intercourse with the peasantry was based on taxes in kind and on remuneration in kind. We entered into the new economic policy with a nationalised industry and a nationalised transport, but with no organisation in the domain of trade, because prior to the new economic policy there was no trade. Under the new economic policy we had to build up both our trading apparatus and our markets, brick by brick.

Our state organs have so far managed to capture the wholesale trade almost entirely and the wholesale retail trade just by one-half, but the retail trade in the autumn of last year was to the extent of 85 per cent, in the hands of private merchants and private capital. The disproportion between agriculture and industry under the conditions of an unorganised market, and with private capital playing a tremendous part in our retail trade, was bound to bring about a crisis in one shape or another. The C.C. of the Party, the Party conferences and the last convention of the Party found the present stage in the new economic policy the opportune moment to raise the question of

organising the market and organising our trade.

Whereas the first two years of the new economic policy were chiefly devoted to the reconstruction of agriculture and industry, in which we attained considerable successes, now, in the third year, we have to concentrate our policy mainly on the organisation of trade and of, the circulation of commodities.

### **Co-operation.**

The organisation of the market, in regard to the consumer, must be affected in the main by the development of co-operation. Therefore, the co-operative movement, under the conditions of the proletarian dictatorship, assumes quite different importance than in a capitalist society. Co-operation cannot be used as a means for changing capitalist society, for overthrowing the bourgeoisie; but after the capture of power by the proletariat, co-operation acquires the importance of a large organisational factor for the socialistic reconstruction of society. Therefore, the question of co-operation is put by our Party on the level of questions dealing with the organic building up of the Socialist society. Only in the form of co-operation is it possible, as a general rule, to organise the small producer and consumer, to organise our peasantry and to connect it with our State industry. Therefore, the questions of co-operation represent to us cardinal questions of principle and of paramount importance, and our immediate success in this field of economic policy we shall estimate primarily from the viewpoint of our success in organising the population in co-operative societies.

## **Co-operation and Private Capital.**

Why is this question so important to us at this time! Because in regard to the circulation of commodities, in the sphere of trade, we have the main centre of the application of private capital, and only in this field is it likely to grow rapidly. In the present situation, with the perfect freedom of the exchange of commodities, our trade represents a weak spot where private capital may entrench itself, become fortified and organised, and establish itself not only as an economic but also as a political force.

In the exchange of commodities between the scattered small producers of the villages and the large organised industries, under inadequate development of co-operation, the private middleman is bound to arise, who will possibly take advantage of the unorganised state of the market to acquire first of all a dominant position in the retail trade, and then to go on farther.

The only way to avoid the dictatorship of the private middleman and capitalist in the domain of the retail trade, is to organise the consumer as a co-operator, thus enabling him to deal directly with the state organs and to develop state trading. Of course, the co-operatives will occupy a dominant position in our trade on the sole conditions that they sell better goods at cheaper prices than the private shopkeeper and middleman. The growth of cooperation and state trading will mean the growth of the Socialist principle as against the bourgeois principle, on the only section of our economic front where private capital could in future present a menace to us.

The Party, realising fully that in the domain of retail trade we do not occupy the dominant position, advanced its cardinal slogan, so to organise the market that the state organs and the co-operatives might gain the lead both in the wholesale and retail trade.

## **Organisation of Trade Does Not Mean Liquidation of the New Economic Policy.**

These instructions of the party were interpreted as the liquidation of the new economic policy. Thus they were interpreted by the Nepmen and by their supporters. I have come across such interpretations in papers published by the mensheviks and the S.R.'s. These people evidently thought, that when we introduced the new economic policy, we intended to allow private capital to acquire complete and absolute domination over the market. This was a misunderstanding, and in none of our resolutions did we say anything of the kind. On the other hand, we do not now propose to abolish private capital in the sphere of trade.

Our policy is directed to strengthening co-operation and state trading to such an extent, that they might become the masters of our market and trade. This we must achieve at all costs. If we retain in our hands the economic key-positions of industry and transport, we cannot allow the relations between the state industries (that is, the working class) and agricultural, (that is, the peasantry), to fall into the hands of private capital.

For this reason we must devote our principal attention at the present time to the growth of state trading and co-operation, to the organisation of the markets. This growth of co-operation and state trading should be promoted not by administrative measures against private capital, but by economic progress due to successful competition. By means of competition our co-operation and state trading will require the place they deserve on the market. The importance we attach to the question of trade at the present moment may be gauged by the fact that on the proposition of our Party, a special Commissariat of Internal Trade was established, whose task is to organise the market, to study the market, and to give every aid and assistance to our state and cooperative trading.

### Finance.

I will turn now to the last question illustrative of our economic activities, and our economic policy—the question of finance. Here I must again refer to conversations with some of the delegates of the Comintern. In the course of our conversation, I remarked that the party discussion was over, and that since the final unanimous resolutions of the party conference and congresses, there was no ground for bringing the question up for renewed consideration. They answered that it only seemed that the discussion was ended, but that as a matter of fact the discussion would continue as long as there was a deficit in our budget, which might still give rise to the financial difficulties in the autumn of this year or the beginning of next year. Then, it seems, the opposition will revive again.

It seems to me that such a statement of the question is fundamentally unsound. The opposition within the party cannot be treated as a parliamentary opposition. We cannot consider the opposition as lying in wait *for the first* sign of decline in the economic or political conditions of the country in order to attack the Central Committee of the Party, and the majority of the party which supports it, particularly since in all practical work the opposition works hand in hand with us, not only in the capacity of rank and file workers, but also in the responsible and directing posts in the Party. Only the enemies of the Soviet system and the Communist movement are waiting for a decline in the condition of the country and the party in order to strike. Apart from the fact of whether the opposition exists or not, the very mention of the possibility of a deficit in our budget at the end of this year or the beginning of next is based on the ignorance of the financial situation of the Union of Soviet Republics. We have already met the deficit of this year, and the budget for the next three months—the last quarter of the present budget year—will be balanced without an



emission of paper money. (Applause.) The hopes of the enemies of Soviet Russia that new complications would again create, a condition favourable—if I may use that expression—for discussion, are postponed for long period. The financial condition is one of the best reflections of the economic condition of the Republic, and a proof of the correctness of our economic policy.

### **The Financial Reform.**

The chief item in the field of our financial policy is the currency reform which we have been carrying on during the last three months, and which has been practically completed during that period. The future historian of say 300-400 years hence, with no statistics of any kind, but simply the one document, that in the year 1924 in June, the U.S.S.R. carried out a money reform, would be obliged to draw the conclusion that in that period we experienced a great economic advance and established a favourable economic condition. (Applause.) In my opinion it would be utterly impossible for a country with a declining and collapsing economic structure to carry out a financial reform as we have been able to do. The currency reform has at the present time been completed by 90 per cent. if not more.

Inasmuch as I am making this report before the Comintern, before comrades from countries with every kind of currency, I am sure they sufficiently realise the importance of a stable currency. We, Bolsheviks have broken the record in many things. Certainly we broke the record, in taking advantage of the right of omission and the fall of our currency. This was demanded by the exigencies of revolution. In its time our depreciating currency served us well and faithfully during the revolution and the civil war. We only abandoned it and went

over to a stable currency when it ceased to be of service to use. The currency reform enjoyed the unanimous support of all sections of the population. I have already pointed out that the working class and the trade union organisations adjusted their wages policy to the need of securing the stability of the currency. The currency reform also received support among the peasantry.

The working class and particularly the peasantry, suffered severely as a result of the rapid fall of the currency. When I questioned the Commissariat of Finance as to how much the government lost during the last year in the time it took for the money collected for taxes to go from the village to the government treasury, they told me, to about 100,000,000 roubles. The loss to the working masses of the population amounts to a far greater sum than that. Every peasant and worker lost something every day Soviet paper money remained in his possession. The workers lost something on every day of delay in the payment of their wages. There was no possibility of saving money. The money burned their hands like hot coals, and every one endeavoured to spend it as quickly as possible, and not to lay it aside even until tomorrow. When they brought me a balance sheet reckoned in Soviet paper money for the coming year, I used to say that to add up Soviet money for December and January, was the same thing as adding English pounds and German pfennigs. Such balances gave no idea of the real financial condition of the establishment concerned. In the period of the greatest divergence of the blades of the "scissors" the high prices were, among other reasons, due to the fact that a guarantee against loss from the depreciation of money was included in the price of commodities. This insurance against the fall of the Soviet paper money, the degree of which it was impossible to foresee, made it impossible to establish where the normal price and the normal profit ended, and where profiteering began. All this led to an extreme

disorganisation of the market, and almost completely destroyed any attempt to regulate prices and organise trade.

### **The Stable Currency and Planning.**

Thanks to the currency reform we can now for the first time turn seriously to the business of establishing the principle of planning and accounting in the factories and trusts, and throughout the state economic system. For the first time we have a stable unit of reckoning.

This has found its reflection in one of the most important plans of our economic system—the budget plan. The introduction of the financial reform was accompanied with the utmost restriction both of all expenses and of the use of emission. The direct aim of this economy is the contraction of the amount of our disbursements to the limits of the real resources which the government may count on in the form of taxes, income from other sources, and the severe limitation of the income from the emission of metal money and credit operations.

We are completing the year 1923-24 with a deficit far lower than that of last year, notwithstanding the increase of the budget during that period by more than 4,000,000 roubles. Our budget last year amounted to 1,355,000 gold roubles, and this year it will amount to 1,765,000 roubles, that is it has increased by more than 30 per cent.

We propose to balance our budget these last months of the present budget year, without having recourse to the emission of paper money. The proposed budget for 1924-25 amounts to 2,100,000 roubles, and furthermore we expect to manage entirely without emission, or to make use of it to a far less extent than during the present year.

Such is the position in the fundamental branches of our

economic life. Can this position be considered very good, or that it is quite satisfactory. I would not say so; I think that we should compare what we have at the present time, not with that which we had before, but with the enormous problems that we have to solve. These tasks of economic construction can be realised fully only on the basis of achievements in all branches of industrial and cultural life inestimably greater than those we have been able to obtain up to the present time. We are still only approaching the realisation of our fundamental task, and are probably just entering the first stage of Socialist construction.

I consider it absolutely necessary to emphasise sharply that all those measures and achievements that we have made until now in different branches of our work, must be considered preparatory. All members of the party must clearly and definitely realise this in the interests of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and the international movement of the working class. We must advance and give an example of really Socialistically organising our industry as a whole. Our achievements in this field act as a powerful stimulus for the development of the international labour movement.

### **Education of the Workers is One of Our Most Important Tasks.**

Lack of support and aid from the rich countries of the world makes our task of organising a Socialist industry in one of the most backward and uncultured countries of the world, one of great difficulty. We are of the opinion that as a whole our management of the economic policy of the country is correct, but at the same time we do not doubt that there are masses of errors and deficiencies in its practical application. Vladimir Ilyich devoted part of his speech at the Fourth

Congress of the Communist International to the question of education.

“ We are learning,” he said, “from the mistakes we make every day. We had no experience in ruling a country. No one in the history of mankind has ever realised such problems and such work as the Russian Communist Party will have to do. We are learning from our own experiences, and even now we cannot say that we have finished the time of preparatory training. The education of the working class of the Union for the management of the first Socialist country in the world is being carried on on concrete problems, on the experience of combining different branches of our industry.”

Consequently one of the most important tasks confronting the party at the present time is to find new organisers among the working class; it must find such men who will set themselves to the task of organising the Socialist society and consider it as their own personal work—who would be imbued with the knowledge of those tasks that the Soviet rule and party have been called upon to fulfil.

### **Contact with the Masses.**

We can guarantee that we shall have no great political difficulties only if the mass workers organisations will work together with us in our economic and Soviet reconstruction. The trade unions play an enormous part in this work, and while working together with the party in protecting the interests of the worker, at the same time they must be a school of Communism and economic reconstruction. The discussion began at the time when the Central Committee discovered that something was wrong in the contact of the leaders of the trade unions with the masses of the workers, and in the relations of the party with non-party workmen. In some cases we found

that contact had been broken. These cases were not general, however. Concurrent with this there was the danger that the higher organs of the Party (gubernia and borough committees) would lose contact with the rank and file party member. I repeat that this was not a general phenomenon, but it was symptomatic and dangerous.

### **The Fight against Apathy, Routine and Bureaucracy in the Party.**

The Central Committee and Central Control Committee of the Party in suppressing these phenomena, decided to carry through a wide campaign for the introduction of the principles of democracy inside the party and unanimously worked out a resolution on this question. The aim of this campaign was to increase the activity and mobility of every party nucleus and party member. This activity was to find expression in a more serious and lively interest in electing men to party positions in the organisation.

One of the most important tasks of every workers' party is to lead the non-party working masses and to maintain close, direct contact with them. This is achieved through the Soviet, and trade union organisations, extensive conferences of non-party workers, trade conferences, general workers' meetings, through specially formed groups of sympathisers for co-operation in problems of party and economic structure, through the participation of non-party workers in our organs of control, etc., etc. During the period of war Communism, when the working man's food was limited to a daily ration of sometimes half a pound of bread, the attention of the worker was directed towards obtaining food and problems of party and economic structure did not attract him so strongly as they do now. The most important problem of the party during the period of war

Communism was the defence of the republic and it was inevitable that compulsion should have played an important part at that time.

When the war ended, the position of the working class improved: his culture and activity rose. In this new situation which was more advantageous for developing the initiative of the working class, the military methods were, of course, no good, but nevertheless they were continued in some places from force of habit. It was necessary to erase all traces of these methods. This was the aim of our resolution on democracy within the party. It was accepted unanimously; there was no disagreement on it. Having achieved an unanimous vote we were sure that we should realise it with exactly the same unanimity, but when we began this work a discussion began with the opposition that had also been unanimous with us over this question.

### **The Discussion.**

The discussion commenced right throughout the Party from top to bottom, and to an extent, hitherto unparalleled in Europe. I personally discussed from six in the evening until ten in the morning. The main point of the discussion was the attack on the Control Committee of the Party which was charged with inability to guide the economic and the internal Party policy. As the discussion developed, new points arose, which caused differences of opinion in the Party. Prior to the discussion, we on the Central Committee received a number of documents. I must say in passing, that prior to reading Souvarine's introduction to the collection of Comrade Trotsky's articles, published in French, I did not know the chronology of these documents as well as did Comrade Souvarine. Some of these documents assert that the Central Committee of the Party had

brought the country to the brink of doom, that the policy of the Central Committee is rendering it impossible for the proletariat of the Soviet Republic and the Russian Communist Party to enter the zone of world convulsions, if such should arise, with no other prospect but that of defeat along the whole front of the proletarian battle. I can hardly imagine such charges being brought against any statesman, without at the same time demanding their resignation, and the convening of a special congress of the Party.

These unparalleled charges were based on the calculation of the development of an inevitable economic and a Party crisis, which, however, did not, take place. As these crises did not take place, the foundation upon which the opposition rested collapsed. Not only did we not have an economic crisis, but all the time economic development is on the upgrade.

### **Party and Apparatus.**

In the discussion, the Opposition brought forward such arguments which compelled the Party, through the Conference and subsequently, the Congress which was called to pass special resolutions on the Opposition. I will just briefly describe these resolutions. When we began to adopt democracy within the Party, the opposition raised the cry: Shake up the whole apparatus; break it! Articles began to be published and speeches made against the whole Party apparatus, which was pictured as the enemy of internal Party democracy.

What is the Party apparatus? It is the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, the gubernia committees, the borough committees, the secretaries, etc., etc. All the things with which the Party works. The watchword was put forward to shake up the whole apparatus and make it so that instead of it commanding the Party, the Party commanded it. What does



this mean? The Party at its congresses passes resolutions. But within the limits of these resolutions, the Central Committee commanded, commands, and will command the Party. The same thing applies to the gubernia conferences and gubernia committees.

The Fifth Congress of the Comintern is now meeting. When the Congress will be over, until the Sixth Congress is called, the Executive Committee of the Comintern will act instead of the Congress within the limits of the instructions given by that Congress. In other words, the E.C.C.I. "commands."

One must not contrast the Party with the apparatus or the apparatus with the Party. The Party is an organisation of persons having the same views, but it is impossible to organise people with the same views without having an organising apparatus. The very attempt to contract the apparatus with the Party and the Party with the apparatus is un-Bolshevistic, non-Leninistic, non-Marxist; it is a petty bourgeois and an anarchistic idea. In the conditions of our struggle and of our work, this idea, this shade in our Party, assumes quite an exceptional significance.

Our comrades of the Comintern must thoroughly understand the complexity of the political conditions here. In one of Comrade Lenin's last articles, he devoted particular attention to this, as if it were his last testament to the Party. In Russia, we have the dictatorship of the proletariat, which, from the point of numbers is being submerged in the petty bourgeois tide. From the point of view of numbers, it is insignificant as compared with the rest of the population.

We have the new economic policy, in the sphere of which two processes are proceeding simultaneously: (1) The growth of Socialist elements in State industry and trade, the growth of co-operation; the improvement in the organisations of the working class, the accumulation of experience by the working

class and the Party in the organisation of industry and in the administration of the country, etc.: (2) The increase of petty bourgeois elements in trade, and the class differentiation going on the villages.

It is inevitable that certain groups in our Party should reflect these moods which sweep over various classes and sections of the population. Our Party is a governing party. It guides and controls the Soviet apparatus. The Soviet apparatus is made up of hundreds of thousands of employees, the ideology of the majority of whom, is alien to us. This apparatus in its turn, presses upon and influences our Party. The economic apparatus by the very nature of its activity comes in constant contact with the bourgeois elements of the new economic policy.

We have no guarantee at all that the upper circles of our factory economic and industrial organisations will not become infected by bourgeois ideology. All this creates the objective conditions for the rise even within the Party of all kinds of petty-bourgeois deviations, reflecting the processes taking place throughout the country.

### **The Old and the Young.**

The second important disagreement was over the question of the old and the young. We have a special term: "the old guard." By this term we mean the members of the Party who have received their baptism of fire, who became Bolsheviks during the illegal period of our Party and whose party standing dates back to several decades of revolutionary party work. During the discussion between the majority of the Central Committee and the Opposition, Comrade Trotsky in an article expressed the idea that the youth represent the best barometer, the best indicator of the temper in the party and in the working

class. With regard to the old guard, history knows cases when it has degenerated. Thus the old guard of the German Party degenerated into a bourgeois party, abandoned the workers, and abandoned the revolution.

This was used as an example to show what becomes of the old men and of the old guard. Nothing in the article was said about this happening to us, but it was said at a moment when we were being discussed. Everybody understood that this was a subtle hint on the possibility that it may happen to us. Of course, the old guard could not tolerate this and regarded this not only as a strategical manoeuvre, but as a political blunder. It was not true to say that the students in the higher schools were the best barometer of the temper in the working class and the best gauge of the activity of the Party. I think that the stake on the youth as the best “barometer and gauge” was made because many of the nuclei in the higher schools supported the Opposition. I think if this had not been the case, the discussion about the old and the young would not have arisen. Be it as it may, this motto was put forward.

We regard it as a blunder, because for the Party the main barometer of political moods, the only real gauge of the correctness of the policy of the Party, the only indestructible basis is the working class—the workers at the bench—and we are not prepared to make any exception to this. The student in the higher educational establishments are people who have left the bench, who have left industry and the working class, people who are becoming red intellectuals. Even when all our intelligentsia will be red, the main basis of our party will still be the workers at the bench and not the intelligentsia. (*Applause.*)

Our old guard, whatever may be said, is not composed of Scheidemannists. This old guard, during the course of many decades bore the brunt of the battle against capitalism, against Czarism, and created the Leninist Bolshevik Party. (*Applause.*)

To say now that our old guard may degenerate in the same way as the German Social-Democrats degenerated is a political error, Had the Bolshevik Party followed the opposition, this error would have caused a dangerous breach between the old and the young, a breach for which there are no grounds in the Party. There is no rivalry between the old and the young in our Party. On the contrary, everybody is waiting for the young guard to come up more quickly, because our ranks are becoming thinned and already it is difficult to work.

### **Party and Groups.**

A section of the Opposition argued the necessity for permitting groups and fractions to be formed, while another section was in favour for allowing groups but not fractions. It seems to me, however, that the difference between a group and a fraction is about the same as between a young pioneer and simply a pioneer (boy scout). This attitude on the question of groups, and fractions, is based on the idea that no danger of a split threatens the Party. I regard this point of view as erroneous and dangerous.

Amidst the political conditions in our country, the relative numerical strength of the working class and of the peasantry, the formation of various sections of bourgeoisie on the basis of the NEP, the class differentiation taking place within the peasantry, and the growth of a rich class of peasants, all these circumstances taken together create the possibility for the rise of various political groups in the country, exercising their influence upon the Party. To this should be added the bourgeois influence that comes from abroad, as our State still remains the only State in the world with a dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Communist Party in Soviet Russia is not only the

governing Party, but the only open mass party in the State. This Party is operating in a country where petty-bourgeois influences are more powerful than in any Western European country. These influences cannot but effect certain groups in the Party. For that reason, in the objective conditions in which the activities of our Party are conducted, there is the possibility of a split. That is why the Party Congress especially prohibited the formation of any kind of fractions in order to maintain the unity of the Party. We regard as petty bourgeoisie the view that our Communist, Bolshevist, Leninist Party could be made up of an unlimited number of open groups, and that the Central Committee of the Party and Party policy could be some kind of combination within the Party itself. This means to open the door, not only to weakening the unity of our Party, to weakening its discipline, but it opens the door also to the formation and the open existence within the Party of a number of groups which arose as a result of the petty bourgeois influences in our country.

### **Former Discussions and the Last Discussion.**

The Opposition with which we had to deal in the recent discussion had the many distinguishing features. In the lifetime of Comrade Lenin, we had three discussions. One on the trade unions, and the other on democratic centralism, and one on the Labour Opposition. The Oppositions in each of these discussions were condemned by Comrade Lenin as petty-bourgeois. The workers' opposition was condemned as anarcho-syndicalistic. In the last discussion, we had a combination of the forces left of the oppositions in the previous discussions. If we examine the signatures to the documents we received, the list of speakers who spoke against the Central Committee, we will find among them the leaders of the old

Opposition on the trade union question, and to there were added representatives of the workers' opposition, all combined in the attack on the Central Committee.

For the first time, the majority on the Central Committee had against it the combined forces for a simultaneous attack upon the main group of the Party, for an attack against the policy which it carried on in the spirit of Comrade Lenin. For the first time in the history of our Party whole Opposition combined, and for the first time in the history of our Party, the combined Opposition failed to receive a single vote at the greatest Congress held in the history of our Party. (*Applause.*)

### **Defeat of the Opposition**

After the previous congress, certain members of the Opposition declared that our congresses and conferences are conducted under a kind of pressure, and that every thinking mind is suppressed. But when Comrade Lenin, personally fought against Comrade Saprionoff and Comrade Trotsky, the pressure of his authority and energy was greater than ours. We did not command the authority that Comrade Lenin commanded. That perhaps explains why varying elements of the Opposition combined. The elections took place amidst conditions extremely favourable for the expression of all shades of opinion in the Party. We had the most largely attended congress known to our Party, for we increased the rate of representation 100 per cent. The elections took place six months after the discussion when all the controversial questions had been dealt with in detail in the press and at meetings. Every member of the Party enjoyed complete freedom of expression to no less an extent than Comrade Radek at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in the discussion of Zinoviev's report. The elections took place after a resolution

on internal party democracy had been carried, in which it was stated that everybody who attempted to shut the mouth of any member during the discussion of this question at the nuclei meetings, would be charged before a Party court. Not a single complaint came in against anyone for attempting to hinder free discussion. In spite of all this, the opposition did not receive single vote, and the Congress unanimously passed a resolution condemning the opposition with an opposition with petty bourgeois tendencies. (*Applause.*)

### **A Monolithic, Disciplined, Consistent Party above Everything Else.**

The most important and most dangerous moment which induced us to propose this resolution to the conference that was held prior to the Congress, was the fact that all the petty bourgeois forces in the country and abroad was attracted towards the opposition. Both as a consequence of the state of affairs within the country as well as the international role of the Party and the union of Socialist Soviet Republics, we considered that the Party should distinguish itself for discipline and consistency over all other foreign Communist Parties. For that reason, the recent congress of the Party not only endorsed the prohibition of fractions within the Party, passed at previous congresses, but in addition endorsed and decided to publish the resolution which was passed at the proposal of Lenin at the Tenth Congress. This resolution stated that members of the Executive who engaged in organising fractious be expelled from the Executive Committee and from the Party. (*Applause.*) This resolution was drawn up by Comrade Lenin; on his proposal it was kept a secret and not published. After his death, in view of the fact that by losing his authority, we lost a powerful force which could guarantee the unity of our Party,

the Congress considered it necessary to endorse and publish this resolution. This decision was passed by the Congress unanimously.

This is how Comrade Lenin's Party emerged from the discussion which took place in the autumn and winter of last year. The complete defeat of the opposition at the conference and the congress was determined by the fact that the forecast of an economic crisis in the country, and within the Party, was not confirmed, and I think that the Comintern will agree with me in the wish that in the future also such forecasts be as little justified as was the forecast of the autumn opposition. (*Applause.*)

After Comrade Rykov's report, the representatives of the Party nuclei of the most important factories of Moscow made speeches of welcome to the Congress and explained to it the attitude of the Moscow Party membership to the Party discussion. All the speakers assured the Congress that the Moscow workers were in full accord with the decisions of the Thirteenth Party Congress and strongly condemned the petty-bourgeois digressions of the opposition.

Comrade Kolarov replied to the addresses of welcome on behalf of the Congress. He thanked the Moscow working men and women for the welcome extended to the Congress and pledged the latter to do its utmost to lead the world proletariat to victory.





## Twentieth Session, June 30th

**Chairman: COMRADE SMERAL.**

**Speaker: COMRADE MANUILSKY.**

### THE NATIONAL AND COLONIAL QUESTION.

Comrade Smeral opened the session with the announcement that the Presidium is of the opinion that the work should be finished by July 8th. In order to be able to do this, the Presidium proposes that some questions be handed over to the Enlarged Executive which is to meet for two or three days immediately after the Congress.

The Chairman also submitted the distribution of business for the remaining period of the Congress. This was agreed to with two dissensions.

The chairman then called upon Comrade Manuilsky to speak on the National and Colonial Question.

It is not for the first time that the national question is on the agenda of our international congresses. At the Second Congress we laid down the fundamental lines of the question. Why are we again obliged to place it on the agenda? You may say because of the events which have happened since the Second Congress. Comrades, this is not so. On the contrary, the entire trend and development of events in Europe and in the colonies show us the correctness of the lines laid down at the Second International Congress. Lately, we have witnessed a very rapid growth of the national and revolutionary movements in all colonial countries. I have to remind you only of the strike of Bombay textile workers which lasted several months, and as you all know, had a very sanguinary ending, to give you a clear idea of the magnitude of the revolutionary movement in the

colonial countries. India not so long ago was also the scene of a tremendous outburst of national indignation among the peasant population of the Nakhba province where in connection with the dismissal of one of the Rajahs, bloody collisions took place between the population and the troops. If time permitted, I could go on citing you scores of similar cases.

In Europe, in countries with powerful national minorities, we witness a growing acuteness of national conflicts. The Versailles Peace Treaty and the series of "peace" treaties which have followed Balkanised Central Europe. In place of large empires with a uniform economic system, they created a conglomeration of national groupings by the establishment of so-called national States. Countries which formerly knew nothing of national oppression, as for instance Germany, now have a national question. The occupation of the Ruhr is an example of this. This phenomenon is one of the most characteristic symptoms of capitalist disintegration. It is to this system of parcelling out and dismembering Europe that we must look for the source of the permanent economic crisis which the economic system of the world is now experiencing. The imperialist cliques, on the ruins of Austria and Germany have created new typically polyglot states which are convulsed by internal national collisions. I will substantiate my statements by giving you a few figures on the national composition of these now States. Let us take for instance a "national" State like Yugo-Slavia. Prior to the war there were 3,000,000 Serbs in Serbia. At present the population of Yugo-Slavia is 11,850,000. Out of this number only 5,000,000, 42.2 per cent. are Serbs. The remainder of the population is international in its composition. In the present Yugo-Slavia there are about 2,800,000 Croats, 23.7 per cent. of the entire population; 950,000 Slovenes, 8 per cent.; about 750,000 Serbo-Croat Moslems, 6.3 per cent.; Macedonians 600,000, 5 per cent.; 600,000 Germans, 5 per cent.; 500,000 Hungarians,

4 per cent.; and 650,000 of other nationalities, 5.6 per cent. This is a typical example of a “national” State.

Let us take another example—Czecho-Slovakia, which presents a similar picture. The present population of Czecho-Slovakia numbers 13,500,000 of which 6,000,000 are Czechs, representing 44.4 per cent. of the total population. The Czecho-Slovakian State has annexed industrial districts employed in the textile, mining and glass making industries with a purely German population of 3,700,000, representing 27.4 per cent. of the population of the Czech State. There are also 2,000,000 Slovaks, 14.8 per cent; 800,000 Hungarians, 5.9 per cent; 400,000 Ukrainians of Carpathian Russia, 2.9 per cent; 360,000 Jews, 2.7 per cent.; and 1.9 per cent. of other nationalities. Let us now take Poland, another product of the Versailles Treaty. The present Poland has a population of 30,000,000 of which only 15,800,000, 52.7 per cent. are Poles. The remainder of the population consists of 6,300,000 Ukrainians, 21 per cent.; 3,300,000 Jews, 11 percent; 2,200,000 White Russians, 7.3 percent.; 2,100,000 Germans, 7 per cent.; and 300,000 other nationalities, 1 per cent. All these nationalities are oppressed by the Polish landowners and bourgeoisie. Let us now take as other examples: Rumania, where national minorities constitute 30 per cent., almost one-third of the population. Greece, where the purely Greek population constitutes 68.4 per cent., Lithuania, where Lithuanians constitute 70 per cent. of the population.

What is the meaning of these figures? They mean that in Central Europe the national question is now assuming a special significance and acuteness, which cannot be denied unless one is determined to ignore facts.

Let us now turn our attention to the acuteness of the national question in the colonies, and let us take for an example Great Britain, the classical example of colonial domination. While the area of Great Britain itself is only 314,000 square

kilometres, its colonies cover almost 400,000,000 square kilometres, viz. British colonies are 130 times bigger than the United Kingdom. Moreover, the population of the United Kingdom is 46,000,000 while the population of the colonies is 429,000,000, which means that to every Britisher there are nine colonial slaves. Is it possible to destroy the might of the entire capitalist system of Great Britain without bringing into motion its colonial population? Will not British imperialism which has such, enormous human and material resources in the colonies, offer a successful resistance to the workers of Great Britain, if the latter do not deprive it of these human reserves which are boundless as the ocean? Perhaps in a lesser degree, other colonial countries present a similar picture. There is, for instance, France with a population of 39,000,000, and a colonial population of 54,000,000, or little Belgium with an area of 30,000 square kilometres, while other colonies comprise an area of 2,420,000 sq. kilometres. The population of Belgium is a little over 7,000,000, while the colonial population is 17,000,000. We have another example in Holland which has a population of 7,000,000, while its colonial population is 49,500,000. If you glance at the post-war map of the world, you will realise the magnitude of the enslavement of mankind. Of the 134,000,000 square kilometres comprising the area of the globe, nearly 90,000,000 square kilometres are colonial possessions. Of the 1,750,000,000 population of the globe, 1,250,000,000 inhabit colonies and countries under the imperialist yoke. Under such circumstances, comrades, I think we must admit that far from reconsidering the decisions of the Second Congress, we must consider methods for their better application in the present concrete situation.

## **Why is the National Question on the Agenda of the Fifth Congress?**

We had three reasons for placing the national question on the agenda of the Fifth Congress. The first reason is because at the Second Congress, basing ourselves on the rich experience of the Russian Lenin-Stalin war of putting the national question, we put forward for the first time the idea of the united revolutionary front between the proletariat and the oppressed nations and colonies. But we did not put into a concrete form (we could not do so because of lack of international experience) the methods for establishing this united revolutionary front. In the course of the four years of our fight we collected enough data and material on the question to be able to come to some general conclusion.

Moreover, many mistakes were made in a number of countries by our young Communist sections in this connection. It would be, perhaps, more to the point to say that some of our sections ignored this question altogether. The second part of my report will be devoted to the analysis of the mistakes which were committed on this field.

Finally, during the period which has elapsed since the Second Congress an event of great political importance has taken place. I mean the establishment in Soviet Russia of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics as an experiment of the solution of the national question under proletariat dictatorship in a peasant country comprising many nationalities.

It is with these three questions that I will deal in my report.

At the Second Congress of the Comintern we dealt with two questions. Firstly to what extent the international proletariat can make use of the national movement of the awakening colonial peoples for the fulfilment of its mission of the emancipation of all the sections of mankind groaning under the yoke of imperialism, secondly, to what extent the oppressed

colonial peoples, supported by the international proletariat, will be able to evade the phase of capitalist development, profiting by the highest forms of Socialist economics achieved by the proletariat in the most developed capitalist countries. By putting the question in this form, we originated the idea of the revolutionary front the details of which were elaborated in the subsequent discussions of our international congresses. But as I have said already, at the Second Congress we were unable to recommend concrete methods for the realisation of a workers' united front between the proletariat and the colonies. Only now can we seriously consider a number of new problems on the strength of concrete experience. These new problems can be divided into four groups of questions.

(a) The first group. Lately we observe in a number of countries a tendency among large masses of workers to form workers' and peasants' parties with a comparatively radical programme for the fight against imperialism. This tendency resulted for instance in the formation of such a workers' and peasants' party in the Dutch Indies, and especially in Java, and in the formation of the Koumintang party in China. It is also due to this tendency that purely peasant parties are being formed such as for instance the Republican Croatian Party of Raditch in the Balkans, whose influence is felt beyond Croatia.

Let us now consider the attitude which the Communist sections of the respective countries must adopt towards these parties, and what should be the concrete organisational forms of their common revolutionary front in the fight against imperialist oppression. We know that the Comintern decided these questions as they arose. It allowed the Communists in Java to take an active part in the work of the local workers' peasants' party there. It also allowed the Chinese Communists to join the Koumintang Party, and we know that it is due to the Chinese Communists that this Party took up a more active attitude in the fight with international imperialism. But we also

know that at the last plenum of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, the work of our comrades in the Koumingtang Party was severely criticised as “class collaboration.” Thus, our sections are faced with a two-fold danger: the danger of ignoring the phenomena which are revolutionising the East, and the danger of losing their proletarian character by collaboration with the petty-bourgeoisie, we are also faced with the question not only of revolutionary collaboration in existing parties of this kind, but of the advisability of Communists taking the initiative in organising such parties in countries with a low standard of economic development. We notice that Communists approach this question with great timidity with the result that we lose control over the national liberation movement which passes into the hands of native nationalist elements.

To this group of questions belongs also the question of the Communist attitude towards various kinds of committees of the national-liberation movement. Imperialist oppression, which reached its culminating point in the post-war period) of course, contribute to the growth of this kind of organisations, which are bound to become more numerous as time goes on. As an example, let us take the Macedonian Committee, headed by Theodore Alexandrov.

(b) The second group of questions is connected with the Near East. At the Second Congress we determined what the attitude of the young Communist sections to the national liberation movement of the bourgeoisie which was on the way to power, should be. But since then, we have been faced with a new situation in two Eastern countries, namely, with the necessity of deciding what the attitude of Communist parties should be to the national bourgeoisie which has already assumed power. I refer to Turkey and Egypt. In Turkey, after a series of revolutionary liberating wars conducted by Kemal Pasha, against foreign armies, the young Turkish bourgeoisie

came into power with the help of a revolutionary wave from below. In Egypt the problem of power was solved by the British Government by means of “reform from above,” by Zaglul Pasha returning from exile and taking over the government of Egypt. Two different movements, but both having the same result as far as social-political changes are concerned. Both cases inaugurate the victory of the native bourgeoisie. And yet in this quite unequivocal situation our Turkish comrades made serious tactical mistakes. Thus, for instance, “Aidylyk” the organ, of the Turkish Communist Party, published a series of articles urging the Communist Party to support the development of national capitalism against foreign capitalism. Here we notice among our Turkish comrades the tendency which once upon a time characterised in Russia the legal Marxism of Mr. Struve who urged the working class to support the development of capitalism in Russia. And just as in the times of Russian Struvism, some of our Turkish comrades seemed at first inclined to confound the interests of the development of the productive forces of the country with the interests of the development of capitalism. Although our Turkish comrades have made good their mistake after it was pointed out to them we must nevertheless draw up instructions which would prevent the repetition of the same thing in other young sections of the Communist International.

(c) The third group of questions is that which has been raised now by the discussion in the press of a number of Communist Parties, especially in Germany and in the Balkans. At the Second Congress we adopted the principle of national self-determination including complete separation. But who is entitled to this right of complete separation? This contentious question, which we have settled long ago, is unfortunately still creating much confusion in the minds of many comrades. Russian comrades know that, at the Eighth Congress of our Party we also had nihilistic deviations in connection with the



question. There were comrades who held the opinion that during the period of imperialism only the proletariat of the country in question had the right to separation. Other ultra-left elements went even further, for they asserted that questions of “self-determination” including “separation” are not within the competence of this or that national proletariat. In the opinion of these ultra-left Russia Party comrades, the question of “self-determination” must be subject to the interests of the proletarian fight as a whole, and that, therefore, the only body entitled to the “right to self-determination” must be the Comintern. Comrades, this example shows you to what absurdities we were reduced in our Russian discussion. Many stormy years have passed since then, and as far as our Party is concerned, this question is definitely settled. We decided that this problem must rest on a careful analysis of the concrete historic conditions under which the self-determination of the nation in question takes place. Let us take two concrete examples.

The occupation of the Ruhr has brought the national question before the German Communist Party. At first there was a tendency within the latter which denied that the occupation of the Ruhr places the German Communist Party under the obligation of raising the national question in Germany. This was an erroneous tendency which reflected the influence of Rosa Luxemburg’s theory. At the same time a number of articles by Comrade Thalheimer appeared in the *Die Internationale*, which went to the other extreme. His version of “self-determination” and the necessity of making use of national discontent in Germany ignored the fact that Germany has a highly developed industrial proletariat, and that Germany is also in the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism. Comrade Thalheimer appeared to base the tactical lines for the Communist Party on the assumption that all class contradictions had disappeared in Germany, and that in

connection with the occupation of the Ruhr Germany had reverted to the economic primitivism of social conditions of Morocco.

Another more flagrant mistake in connection with the national question is the mistake made by our German Comrade Boris who has been quoted here more than once. Contrary to Thalheimer, this writer was inclined, to declare that the proletariat alone (including the colonial proletariat) is entitled for self-determination, and that the right of the colonies to separation can be vindicated by the formation of Socialist Soviet Republics within them.

This group of questions includes also the question as to whether "separation" is feasible in the imperialist epoch within the framework of the bourgeois State. Comrade Lenin, in discussing the right to separation, with his Russian opponents, referred to the example of Norway. Yet if we study carefully the attitude of our Balkan comrades, we will find they take a negative attitude to this question. There is no doubt whatever that the bourgeoisie cannot solve the national question within the framework of the capitalist State. But this does not mean that we must postpone the realisation of the right of oppressed nations to separation until social revolution has been victorious throughout the world. We have only to peruse the decisions of the Balkan comrades on the national question to come to the conclusion that this is precisely their view on the right to separation. They make the right to separation dependent on the formation of a Balkan Federation of Soviet Workers' and Peasants' Republic. But what does such a condition mean? The Balkans are the crux of the entire imperialist policy of the big powers of Europe. The victory of the workers' and peasants' power in the Balkans, the corridor of the international imperialist cliques, means the victory of the international proletariat. Therefore, raising the question in that form is tantamount to ignoring the acute problems which confront us at

present.

This fourth group of questions is connected with the question of irredentism, which has a two-fold form: the question of irredenta between a workers' and peasants' state and a bourgeois state, and the question of irredenta between two bourgeois states. This group of questions is all the more important as the imperialist re-distribution of the world which followed the European war, has dismembered nations and peoples. The problem of revolutionary irredentism assumed a very concrete form in the relations between the U.S.S.R. and the states adjoining it. Thus, at the Second Congress of the Polish Communist Party, the Polish Party decided to support the movement, of the Ukrainians and White Russians forming part of the Polish state for their inclusion into the Workers' and Peasants' Republics of the U.S.S.R. Similar declarations were made by Esthonian Communists, Communists of Carpathian Russia, etc.

But side by side with this attitude of our Communist Parties, there are also decisions of a contrary nature.

The Reichenberg Conference of the Czecho-Slovakian Party, held in 1921 when the party was still the opposition in the Social-Democratic Party, in discussing the question of revolutionary irredentism in the event of the victory of the proletarian revolution in Germany (3½ million Germans are now subjects of the Czecho-Slovakian States) declared itself against the separation of German territories, on the plea of the interest of proletarian revolution in Czecho-Slovakia. But if our Communist Parties are ready to recognise the admissibility of revolutionary irredentism, they must also take into account the following fact: In the theses on the national question adopted by the Second Congress of the Polish Communist Party nothing is said about it "the recognition of the right to separation" of the German population of the present Poland, which numbers two million. There is no mention whatever

about the German population's right to separation in any of the resolutions of the Czecho-Slovakian Communist Party. The attitude of the Rumanian Communist Party towards the Hungarian population of Transylvania, is also very characteristic. Rumanian comrades advocate the establishment of an independent Transylvania Republic in contradistinction to the irredentism of the Hungarian population of Transylvania which is inclined to incorporation with Hungary. In this case, too, one can see the fear that "the right of self-determination" might objectively become, support to the foreign bourgeois government.

This shows you, comrades, in what complicated national conditions our Communist Parties have to work, and what an amount of revolutionary pliability they must possess to give a concrete form to the question of "self-determination" including separation. This work of giving concrete forms to our fundamental decisions in connection with the question of irredentism in the various countries must be done in commissions. And this is one of the tasks of the Fifth Congress. We are bound to make mistakes if we do not put this branch of our work into concrete forms.

The many mistakes made by the various sections of the Comintern in connection with this question are due to the fact that many of our comrades are not yet rid of social democratic ideology. These mistakes can be said to be of four fundamental types, all of which are survivals of the attitude of the Second International on the national question. The first type of these mistakes is personified in the attitude of some Yugo-Slavian comrades, especially of Comrades Sima Markovitch and Miliokovitch who are now in prison. I have already given figures of the national composition of the Yugo-Slavian state which showed you what all enormous significance the national question has for the Yugo-Slavian Communist Party. And yet, according to Comrades Markovitch and Miliokovitch the

national question in Serbia is a purely bourgeois invention. According to Comrade Markovitch, the question as to whether Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes are three nations or one, is only purely theoretical question which should not influence the practical policy of the Party. Very characteristic is Comrade Markovitch's attitude towards the Macedonian question. You know that Macedonia plays at present, after its partition between Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians, the very same role in the Balkans that the Balkans play in Europe. A fierce fight is being waged around Macedonia, and especially around the question of an outlet into the Aegean Sea, and the fight for the port of Salonica between the small robbers in the Balkans. At the same time there is in Macedonia a strong national movement for the re-establishment of an independent State. What is Comrade Markovitch's attitude to this national movement? In his articles he expresses the opinion that the Macedonian question is not by any means a Balkan, but a European problem, which cannot, therefore, be finally solved before a victory of the European proletariat over the bourgeoisie has been achieved. If the question is put in this way, what will be the result? Only a passive attitude of the Communist Party to one of the most burning questions which are agitating the various Balkan nationalities at present. Similar mistakes are made by our Greek comrades in connection with the Macedonian question. A few months ago, when an armed conflict seemed imminent in the Balkans, the Executive Committee of the Balkan Federation issued a Manifesto which called upon the proletariat of the Balkan countries to stand up for Macedonian independence. The Greek Communist Party not only did not publish this Manifesto, but even sent a reasoned protest against the issue of such a document.

The second type of mistake is bound up with certain traces of social imperialism. Just as the "famous" Austrian school of thought (Otto Bauer and Renner) in the course of the European

war stood for the recognition of the integrity of the Austrian boundaries, so the German social-imperialistic school of Kuno and Lepcha and the rest started from the conception of a state in which the productive forces had outgrown the limits of the country. This school approaches the position of the obscure Dutch Social coloniser, Van Kol, who at one of the International Congresses of the Second International recommended that each Socialist party should formulate its own colonial policy. However distressing it may be to admit it, we find that this viewpoint even finds reflection in the political conclusions of certain individual party members. About a year ago, the Comintern addressed an appeal to the colonial slaves, calling on them to revolt against their subjugators. When this appeal reached the section passed a resolution condemning it.

In its declaration this section expressed great agitation over the fact that at the very moment when the noble French nation was bringing civilisation to the colonies, the organisation of the international working class should appear, calling on the colonial people to answer the benevolent efforts of the French colonisers with black ingratitude. (*Laughter.*) I ask the French comrades whether these possibly excellent Frenchmen, but very indifferent Communists, have been excluded from the party. I take the liberty of inquiring further of those comrades the whereabouts. of those documents in which the French Communist Party loudly proclaimed the slogan of the separation of the colonies. (Soliet interrupts: "In the programme of the Party.") Where are your declarations supporting the liberation of the colonies from French imperialism! You, French comrades, have 800,000 native workers in France. I ask you, what have you done to organise these workers, to prepare revolutionary agitators for the colonies from among their ranks! In your army there are 250,000 black soldiers. Do you think you will be able to make a social revolution if these 250,000 are on the other side of the

barricades! Will your working class be able to win a single strike if the bourgeoisie have at their disposal these black reserve troops which they can incite any minute against your heroic proletariat? Have you carried on any anti-militaristic propaganda among these black troops? (From the French section: Yes, yes, yes.)

I do not know of a single serious documentary proof of it. I do know that we must wage a vigorous fight against this attitude in the party. I will cite a certain fact which on the surface may seem to be quite unimportant, but which is extraordinarily indicative of the psychology of our parties. During the Lyons Congress the Comintern addressed an appeal to the French workers and the colonial peoples. The editors of the Central organ of the party, *Humanité*, in publishing the appeal deliberately cut out from the text the words "to the colonial peoples." Is it possible for a Party having an attitude like this to carry on propaganda among the "natives?" I heartily wish that in this question at least the French Party would return to the traditions of Jaures. We differ greatly from the dead leader of the French Socialist Party in both theory and practice. Jaures was a pacifist, he personified all the genius and all the weakness of a whole epoch in the development of the Labour movement. But anyone who remembers those years which preceded the war knows that Jaures always expressed himself firmly and decisively against the colonial adventures undertaken by the French government. You remember what a courageous campaign Jaures conducted at the time of the Moroccan adventure which threatened to bathe all Europe in blood. I will cite one more fact from recent events. Not long ago general elections were held in your country, comrades from France. Why was there not a single native among the seven candidates allotted to the colonies? Why could you find only representatives of the ruling race who have stirred up general indignation against themselves, to act as candidates for

the colonies. Still greater reproach is due to our British comrades for their passivity in the matter of colonial propaganda. The British comrades represent a proletariat more infected with colonial prejudices than all others in the Comintern. Marx once wrote on the question of Irish independence that the British workers would never be free until Ireland was free. Marx understood very well that the British proletariat would never succeed in destroying the powerful capitalist organism of the British Empire without the support of those peoples suppressed by the English lords. These words were uttered many years ago when the British Empire did not yet represent a great colonial power in the world, occupying one-third of the earth's surface. Do our British comrades think that the revolutionary process begins with the British proletariat liberating itself, and then in the capacity of a Messiah, carrying deliverance to the colonial peoples? We do not think so.

In none of the documents on the relations of the British Communist Party to the colonies which have been brought to us for perusal have we found a single declaration in which our British comrades have clearly and unmistakably demanded the separation of the colonies from the British Empire. Show us the documents in which you have defended Ireland's right to independence. And yet there are constant opportunities for declarations of this kind. Since the Labour Government of MacDonald has been in power you have not taken advantage of a single opportunity to bring this question before the proletariat of your country. Under the Labour government the oppressive burden of British imperialism weighs down the colonies as it did before. Lord Reading, the Viceroy under whom the famous trials were conducted against even such moderate revolutionists as Ghandi, the Brothers Ali, and others, remains in his post. MacDonald's government has not taken the trouble even to replace the 300,000 bureaucrats who are ruling over the



population of British India. Where is your fighting spirit, British comrades? Where is your readiness to carry a decisive struggle for freedom into the most far-lung corners of India?

The Russian comrades are grateful to you for launching the slogan "Hands Off Soviet Russia," at the time of the armed intervention. But the entire International would rejoice even more if you were now to launch another no less courageous call: "Hand Off the Colonies."

To the third class of mistakes belong those connected with the theory of Rosa Luxemburg. Rosa Luxemburg's viewpoint might be characterised as the theory of national nihilism. Rosa Luxemburg based her theory on the assumption that in the imperialist epoch every national movement is inevitably doomed to be used by the imperialist powers in their own interests. Therefore, Rosa Luxemburg believed that the proletarian party should eradicate from its programme the clause relating to the self-determination of peoples. Just as Kuno's theory of government represented the latest phase in the development of imperialism, so Rosa Luxemburg's theory represented the childhood stage of the Labour movement when the question of the seizure of power seemed a far-off problem to the working class.

It was only the Leninist Bolshevik school which put forward the question of the seizure of power as a question of the present day, and which was able to connect this problem with the interests of those millions who represent the intermediate stage in the social mechanism and on whose behaviour depends, in the last analysis, the victory of the proletarian revolution. We have only to examine some of the resolutions on tactics of our European comrades to realise that we are still not quite free from the influence of Rosa Luxemburg's views. I have already cited the resolution of the Jugo-Slavian comrades who subordinate the self-determination of peoples to the victory or the proletariat in the Balkans and

throughout Europe. A still clearer reflection of Rosa Luxemburg's views is to be found in the position of some of our German comrades.

Finally, it is necessary to call attention to the fourth type of mistakes. To this category of mistakes belongs the position of our Turkish comrades from "Aidynluk," who actually advocate the class collaboration of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. This position represents nothing new. Anyone who remembers the position of the Ukrainian Social-Democrats of the former Austrian Empire, and that of the Polish Socialists of Austria will understand that the mistake of our Turkish comrades has its root in the entire social patriotic ideology of the Second International.

## **THE UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS.**

### **A Great Experiment in Solving the National Question under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.**

I pass on to the last part of my speech—the question of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics that was formed during the interval between the Fourth and Fifth Congresses. You know, comrades, that Russia, from the point of view of its national composition was much more complicated than the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. There were only eleven nationalities in Austria before the war while we have more than a hundred different large nations and small nationalities on the enormous territory of the previous Tsarist empire. It was very difficult to solve, the national question in a country with such a variegated national composition, and the methods applied for its solution must serve as a lesson for comrades from other countries.

Another difficulty was that the proletariat was Russian in nationality while the peasantry, for the most part was of other nationalities. There are sixty-nine million Russians and sixty-five million of other nationalities in the U.S.S.R. Our first problem was to establish solidarity between three millions Great Russian, and the millions of peasantry of other nationalities. There was still a third difficulty that confronted us. This many millioned mass was, in reality, at different stages of economic development. Side by side with highly developed industrial centres we have about ten millions that have not yet developed from being nomadic tribes. The formal declaration of equality was insufficient, and would have had as little value and achieved as few practical results as the declaration of equality in the great French Revolution. The proletariat of our country had to set itself the problem of establishing a real economic equality, which is the only security for the normal development of nations forming part of our workers' and peasants' republic. We had to solve this problem in a country with limited economic resources.

Comrade Lenin once said that Soviet Russia, because of its geographical position, is a natural bridge between Europe and Asia. This is undoubtedly true. Our revolution had a double result. It reacted on the European proletariat in the sense that it made it believe in its own power and in its ability to seize power. Simultaneously, it reacted on the Oriental nations. Kautsky prophesied, after the 1905-1906 revolution, that the Russian revolution would awaken the nations of the Middle East and Asia to historical life. This prophecy has proved correct. After the October Revolution, 1917, Soviet Russian became the centre of gravitation and attracted the Oriental nations to itself. This situation obliged the Russian Communist Party and the Russian proletariat to justify the hopes placed upon them by the Eastern nations, We know very well that we would never have succeeded in preserving the independence of

the Soviet Republics in our present situation of capitalist encirclement had we not formed an united front between the oppressed nationalities and the proletariat from the Baltic Sea to the farthest Asiatic plains. The Russian Vendee deliberately chose the borderlands of the old Russian Empire for their offensive against the victorious proletariat of Moscow and Leningrad. And it was only the fact that we had behind us the sympathy of millions of the population in these borderlands, that helped us to smash Dutov, Semonov, Kolchak, and Denikin, the leaders of the counter-revolution in the border countries. The notorious renegade, Paul Levi, can ridicule the Bashkir and Kalmik Communism as much as he pleases, but we know that the jokes of such gentlemen as Paul Levi, serve to show their colonisatory character.

How were we able to realise this union? We were enabled to do this by two methods. Firstly, we acknowledged unequivocally, the right of nations to self-determination, even to secession under the Soviet regime. We were enabled to paralyse the Chauvinist tendencies among those peoples that had been at one time oppressed by the Tsar. At the same time we weakened the influence of petty bourgeois nationalist parties that wished to take advantage of national oppression of the old Tsarist Empire for the purpose of sowing enmity and dissatisfaction among the nationalities. I wish to call the attention of our foreign comrades to a very interesting clause in our constitution. This clause states that every nation forming part of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics can leave it at any moment, This can be carried out without any restricting formalities whatever.

Such clauses are characteristic of our constitution, and professors of bourgeois state law cannot understand this. For example, Monsieur Milyukov recently in a white-guard newspaper occupied himself with an investigation of the legal nature of the constitution of our Workers' and Peasants' Union

and he expressed the opinion that it was without any legal foundation since it lacked the element of force, and, therefore, such a government with a variable composition cannot take upon itself any international obligations. Monsieur Milyukov considered that his legal analysis must create a fearful impression of the Western European bourgeois governments and withhold them from recognising the Union of Soviet Republics. However, comrades, the very fact that this element of force is lacking in the organisation of our Union forms the tremendous power of our moral influence over nationalities taking part in our Union.

The other means whereby we succeeded in uniting the different nationalities into one brotherly amalgamation was the socialisation of the riches and natural resources of the country and converting them into the public property of the population, of the U.S.S.R. According to the theory of bourgeois state law all the riches and natural resources are the property of that nation that exists on this bourgeois theory of law. Naturally, the question of sea routes, ports, borders, and customs acquires enormous importance and is the source of armed conflicts between bourgeois states. The formation of the Soviet Union advanced a new theory of state law, where the question of borders has a secondary importance. In our Union a man from Murmansk has the same right to the Black Sea ports and the Donets Basin as a peasant from Poltava or a miner in the Donets coal basin. At the same time the populace of Odessa and the Don basin have the same rights to the Siberian gold mines as the Siberian peasant or a nomad from Turkestan. You understand comrades that the question of borders between states forming the Soviet Union, can have only an administrative importance in such a state of affairs, and cannot cause any conflicts.

The formation of our Union must be a powerful weapon of propaganda in the hands of European parties, since it gives

them the ability to compare the methods of solving the national question, adopted by the Soviets and those applied by the bourgeois states. This is why our experience must become the property of all the European proletariat. I wish to conclude my speech with this generalisation and I know that in the commission on the national question that will be formed we shall be able to find those practical solutions that will stimulate the national movements in different countries and impart to them a revolutionary character. The time for declarations of a general character has passed; we have now a period of creative, revolutionary work in the colonies and among national minorities. If we fulfil these tasks we will have for the success of the international revolution to which we are devoted and which is guarded for the workers of the world by the Communist International. (*Applause.*)

## Twenty-First Session, July 1st

**Chairman: COMRADE GEBHARDT.**

**Speakers: ROY, KATAYAMA, BOSCHKOWITZ,  
KREIBICH, JACKSON, GILBEAUX.**

### DISCUSSION ON NATIONAL AND COLONIAL QUESTION.

Comrade Gebhardt opened the Session and called on Comrade Roy to open the debate.

**Comrade Roy:** As Marxists, we know that in the colonial countries, capitalism is not well developed, and it is mere romanticism to speak of a revolutionary proletariat there. But there are masses of peasants and the importance of the revolutionary movement is there. The united front must be extended beyond capitalist countries to the peasants in exploited countries. And this is most important in imperialistic countries like England, where there are no peasants except in the colonies, so that without an extension of the slogan of the workers' and peasants' government to the colonies, this slogan can have no reality. The theses of the Second Congress also stated that it was the duty of the International to support the revolutionary movement in the colonies and in backward countries for the exclusive purpose of uniting the various units of the future proletarian parties and educating them to the consciousness of their specific tasks, that is, to the tasks of the struggle against the bourgeois democratic tendencies within their respective nationalities.

If this is our task, then we must have direct connection with the masses, but the resolution says, that we must have

direct connection with the national liberation movements. These include all sorts of classes and aims. We shall never progress if we stand by this vague formula, our failure hitherto has been due to theoretical confusion.

To understand this, we must analyse the social composition of all the different classes in all these different countries, and then lay down a general law. For instance, the colonial countries themselves may be divided into at least three groups: (1) countries, where feudalism is still the dominant form. (2) Semi-colonial countries having the semblance of a national State, but dominated financially and militarily by imperialist countries. (3) Pure colonies completely dominated by imperialism.

The first group plays no great revolutionary role at present, because although there are frequent revolts of the oppressed, they are disorganised and spasmodic and frequently led by reactionaries, priests, etc. It is difficult to give a revolutionary direction to them, but they should be recognised as allies and supported by something more than resolutions.

In the second group, e.g., Persia, China, etc., it is also difficult to find a uniform political character among the social classes. But this is all the more reason for giving a careful attention to facts and not being misled by glittering formulas.

Manuilski said that in the last year there had been a great revival of the national movement in British India. As a matter of fact, last year, was a period of the worst depression in the nationalist movement there. In 1920 and 1921, this movement, led by bourgeois and petty bourgeois leaders struck terror into the hearts of British imperialists, but that period is now past. It is misleading to suggest otherwise, or to quote the Bombay strike as a proof of the power of the nationalist movement.

What was the Bombay strike? In any other country it would have been considered as of the first revolutionary importance, but because it happened in a colonial country no



one knows anything about it. 150,000 men and 30,000 women struck for three months against Indian and British capitalist imperialism—it was a true revolutionary movement, and had nothing whatever to do with the national movement. Its origin lies in the conflict between Indian and British capitalistic interests in the textile trade. During the war and afterwards, under pressure from the government which desired peace, some small wage increases were given to the workers. When the owners tried to take these away, the workers refused to accept their conditions. In came the nationalist leaders—petty bourgeois humanitarians, radicals and Fabians, who still lead the trade unions—and told the Workers to accept the starvation wage offered for the sake of national interests: If they did not, Lancashire cotton would come in and under sell Indian cotton. But for the first time in history, the Indian workers repudiated their leaders, and went on with the fight. Yet this is quoted to illustrate the recrudescence of nationalism. The workers were left to struggle without their leaders, people were killed by machine guns whenever there was the slightest disturbance, the lock-out was imposed upon 83 mills, there were many deaths from starvation, and when at last a relief committee was organised, the National Congress refused to contribute to it. Such is the recrudescence of nationalism.

The petty bourgeois are still linked in thought with feudalism and landlordism and are separated from the masses, but if we organise the peasantry and the workers they will force the pace for the petty bourgeois, who are now ready to compromise with imperialism for the sake of police and money. If they find that by fighting for more, they gain support from the masses in their fight they, will grow bolder and less inclined to compromise. No foreign country can dominate another unless it first wins over a section of the people. This imperialism has always done, choosing sometimes one class and sometimes another. (In India, where national capitalism is

growing rapidly, the national bourgeoisie has been won over to support the Empire, and has even demanded in a recent manifesto that military power and foreign relations should remain in the hands of the British Government. Why military power? Because the Indian bourgeois knows better than anyone else that the discontent of the masses is economic and not nationalistic, and the exploiting class in India demands protection from the exploited. Indian capitalism is running straight into the arms of British imperialism and the same tendency will soon be in other countries.

Referring to Egypt, Comrade Roy said that Zaghlul, who is now in power there, had used more revolutionary phrases than anyone, and had been accepted by the Egyptian people as their leader. But Zaghlul came into power by exploiting the nationalist movement of the masses, and he was still merely exploiting them. They had supported him without asking for anything for themselves, and they were getting nothing—neither economic nor political. The whole Central Committee of the Egyptian Communist Party were in jail, where they were being brutally ill-treated. Thus we see that a nationalist government can be in power without any nationalist liberation. National liberation can only be achieved when imperialism is overthrown and the Egyptian proletariat though young and inexperienced must lead the peasantry in this task. The Communist attitude towards the Egyptian bourgeois and petty bourgeois should be to encourage them to fight against imperialism, and to put forward always stronger demands, supporting them in refusing compromises.

In conclusion Roy, said that after the debate on this imperial question, it should be approached in the commission on the broad lines above indicated. The direct contact of the Comintern must be with the social class which is most revolutionary, and the separate conditions of each country must be analysed from this point of view. Every section of the

International must be given its special task, in order that national sections may not be reproached again with the negligence which has not been their fault.

**Comrade Katayama:** Comrade Lenin gave a new meaning to the national question, which became one of the fundamental policies of the Communist International. That the Second International is nothing but a tool of imperialism was shown by its policy towards the national question. The Communist International knows that without the overthrow of imperialism, world revolution is impossible, and the struggle of the colonies and semi-colonies is inseparable with the struggle of the proletariat of the imperialist countries.

The Second International interprets self-determination as self-government only, where the Third International favours self-determination even to the point of secession.

There are several types of nationalist movements, depending on internal conditions in the country, and the task of the Communist International is to formulate the correct tactics with reference to each type of nationalist movement. "Workers' and Peasants' Government" is the most important slogan for the proletarian national movement.

The position of Japan in the Orient is of great significance for the revolution in the East because Japan is the only capitalist-imperialist country in the Orient. The war and the earthquake seriously affected Japan's international prestige, as manifested by the American immigration law passed recently, and Japan is beginning to turn to Soviet Russia and China to combat Western Imperialism. Thus the C.P. of Japan has an important task, for upon it depends the revolutionary fate of the whole Orient. The C.P. is growing in influence and has forced connections with the movements in Korea and China.

It is the duty of the Workers' Party of America to make use of the growing nationalist movement in the Philippines.

The recent immigration laws passed in America indicate the growing struggle between American and Japanese imperialism. The pretext that the law was passed to protect the American worker against Oriental competition must be pointed out to the Japanese and American workers. The law is also an expression of the monopolistic spirit of the American bourgeoisie. We must fight such immigration laws in accordance with the spirit of the theses of the Fourth Congress.. We must explain the significance of these laws to the proletarians of both countries. Japan will tend to utilise the discrimination against all Orientals in its imperialist designs, and the workers of the whole Orient must be warned against this plan.

**Comrade Boschkowitsch (Yugo-Slavia):** The state of the Serbians, Croatians and Slovenians, was formed as a result of the military collapse of Germany and Austria. The strongest national element are the Serbians who constitute 39 per cent., the next strongest are the Croatians and Slovenes, next come 6 per cent. of Moslems, 5 per cent. Macedonians, 4 per cent, Germans, 4 per cent, Hungarians and so on. The democratic ideas of the Yugoslavian bourgeoisie are of quite recent origin. In 1917/18 it claimed that the Serbians and Croatians were one nation, while after the war and the revolution the Serbian and Slovenian bourgeoisie claimed to be a homogeneous nation, and together they suppressed the revolts of workers and peasants. After the failure of the Russian offensive on Warsaw, and after the collapse of the revolutionary movement in Italy, the struggle began between the Serbian bourgeoisie on the one hand, and the Croatian and Slovenian on the other hand. Now the idea of three different nations emerged. At the same time a reign of white terror was inaugurated under the most pronounced hegemony of the Serbian bourgeoisie. In August, 1921, the Defence of the Realm Act was promulgated, and

Communist propaganda was made punishable by 20 years imprisonment or by the penalty of death. The internal politics of Yugo-Slavia were much influenced by Soviet Hungary and by the German and Russian revolutions. When our Party was made illegal, it transpired that it had not taken sufficient stock of the role of the national press. Unfortunately, there was far from complete unity in this respect among a considerable number of our comrades.

**Comrade Kreibich:** The new national states show how the bourgeoisie failed to solve the national problem while the U.S.S.R. shows how social revolution can solve it. The oppressed nations and national minorities must be accorded the right of self-determination, even to the extent of accession from the State. But this does not mean that we must, as party, declare ourselves invariably in favour of separation. We shall have to decide in every individual case as to the proper slogan. Of deciding moment to us in this respect will be the proletarian class interest, the interest of the proletarian revolution.

Let me cite the practical instance of the Czecho-Slovakian State. Here the political demand in our daily struggle will be based on the standpoint that Carpathian Russia, like Eastern Galicia, belongs only to the Soviet Republics, and that this is the only revolutionary slogan for the national liberation struggle in Carpathian Russia. Here the aim of the national movement is obviously in keeping with the interests of the proletarian revolution.

Quite different again is the situation in the German populated districts of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. Here we have no irredentist movement. This is due to the fact that these districts, ever since the beginning of the capitalist era, were in no way allied with Germany, and that for centuries these districts were economically identified with Czechia. First of all, it ought to be observed that German Bohemia is a highly

developed industrial district, so that here can be no talk whatever of the oppression of an economically backward country by alien capitalism. The peculiar geographical, economic and strategical position of German Bohemia renders quite complicated the question of its separation and incorporation with Germany. To a proletarian Germany, a Bohemia torn from the bourgeois Czecho-Slovak Republic would merely be a dangerous handicap, because its incorporation with Germany could be attained only through a war with Czecho-Slovakia. But the German revolution would have its hands full to defend its own territory and to liberate the territories that were taken away from Germany. On the other hand, the revolution in Czecho-Slovakia would lose valuable militant forces.

But if a victorious proletarian revolution should take place in Czecho-Slovakia before it does in Germany, we would have to do our utmost to suppress an irredentist movement in the German districts, which would only be of a counter-revolutionary nature, because the separation of these districts and their annexation to a capitalist Germany would compel the proletarian Czecho-Slovak State to capitulate to the Czech capitalism.

**Somner (Germany):** Comrade Manuilsky said that Comrade Neurath and I had the best of Thalheimer and Radek in the Ruhr question, but he did not make the contentious question clear. Neurath's and my contention was—that this was not a question of a national fight of the oppressed German people, but a question of the continuation of the imperialist war. It is a question of Lenin's formula: transformation of the imperialist war into civil war. But Thalheimer and Radek were of the opinion that the Ruhr war could not be an imperialist war, because there is no longer such a thing as German imperialism. Therefore, we ought to consider the question if it

is possible for us to go part of the way with bourgeois nationalism. We were attacked on the strength of Lenin's criticism of the Junas pamphlet which says that a national war in Europe is not out of the question, if one of the belligerent groups suffers a crushing defeat and the labour movement meets with & serious setback. It requires courage to refer to this quotation at a time when the rising wave of powerful mass actions brings the question of social revolution to the fore.

Comrade Manuilsky spoke of deviations in the direction of Rosa Luxemburg's theory. I quoted Rosa Luxemburg's because to her is due the honour of having been first in the field against social-patriotism. It was she who coined this word.

I should like to point out that in Upper Silesia we were able to solve the national question on proletarian lines, and to conduct the defensive of the German and Polish Bourgeoisie in perfect unity.

**Comrade Jackson (America):** The most significant recent development in connection with the negro question in America is the migration of negroes from the south of the United States to the north. During the war they were attracted by high wages, but there is more than a mere economic basis for this migration. It is the expression of the growing revolt of the negroes against the persecutions and discriminations practiced against them in the south. The effect of this migration to the north is that the negroes, because of the higher standard of living they find in the north, and because they are unorganised, become the tools of the exploiters against the white workers, whose standard of living decreases as a result of negro competition. The recent race riots are due directly to this economic development and not to anti-race fooling.

The negro problem is a peculiar psychological problem to the Communists. The negroes are not discriminated against as a

class, but as a race. Even the wealthy bourgeoisie among the negroes suffer from persecution, and a peculiar negro culture and peculiar psychology have developed. The ideas of Marx have spread only slowly among the negroes, because the Socialists and even the Communists have not realised that the problem must be dealt with in a specialised way. The same newspapers do not satisfy the needs of the negro worker which suit the needs of the white. The same speeches, propaganda, literature, will not suffice. The negro feels no antagonism to Communism, but wants to know where it will satisfy his peculiar needs.

In February of this year a Congress took place where all negroes of all classes were represented. It was dominated by petty bourgeois negroes, but the Communists were able to insert a few class ideas into the programme.

The negroes are destined to be the most revolutionary class in America, but Communist propaganda among the negroes is hampered by the lack of publicity carrying a special appeal.

The negroes in the south are engaged primarily in agriculture, and an agriculture movement is developing there, which the Communists must exploit to the full.

**Comrade Guilbeaux:** The imperialism of Britain and France are the most specific and the most powerful. The two parties, the British and the French, must carry on a determined fight against the capitalism of their countries, which dominates a great portion of the universe. The British Party has done very little by way of a campaign in favour of revolutionary movement in the colonies. But the British Party is small numerically. I think we should be much more severe with the French Party, which counts 60,000 adherents.

The French Communist Party displays passivity and reformism on the imperialist and colonial question. A colonial Commission was once appointed by the Party. What has this



Commission done? The Party must elect an investigation commission, consisting of two or three comrades, who will undertake to travel about in the various French colonies and study on the spot how to create centres of education and propaganda.

The party should have adopted a far greater number of native candidates at the recent legislative elections. It required a month for *Humanité* to make up its mind to publish Roy's first open letter to MacDonald. The information and articles published by the Party press on the imperial and colonial question, are far from adequate.

*Humanité* has scarcely said a word about the Balkan question. Even on the Albanian problem, where we find expressed the conflicts between Turkey, Greece, Italy and America, *Humanité* confined itself to certain communications from the bourgeois press agencies, and that is all.

Russia is a marvellous laboratory in every respect. In the vast territories of the U.S.S.R., one can study what our Russian comrades have done in the interests of the proletariat and the poor peasants, as well in the interest of the populations which have long been backward and oppressed. It is now certain that the revolutionary struggle will extend throughout the East and the colonial countries. The final emancipation of the proletariat cannot be accomplished without the assistance of the backward and oppressed peoples. It is to be hoped that all our comrades will draw the lessons from the magnificent teachings of Lenin.

## Twenty-Second Session, July 1st

**Chairman:** GEBHARDT.

**Speakers:** SELLIER, ROSSI, HGUEN-AI-QUAK, MACMANUS, VOSILIEV, GEORGESCU, PEPPER, CHENIVA, AMTER, FAPLOUK, RADEK, SOMANEV.

### DISCUSSION ON NATIONAL AND COLONIAL QUESTION.

**Louis Sellier (France):** The French Section admits that the efforts made hitherto by the French Party were not commensurate with its tasks and obligations on this field. But I should like to correct some of Comrade Manuilsky's arguments, which are somewhat exaggerated. The so-called slavery thesis adopted by the small Algerian section of Sidi-Bel-Abbes did not express the viewpoint of the entire French Party where it raised a storm of protest. The leading organ of the Party would have expelled this section if it had not forestalled this fate by joining the Frossard group which is the right place for it.

Our Party, together with the United General Confederation of Labour (C.C.T.U.) undertook the organisation on trade union lines of the foreign and native workers in France. We elaborated the system of colonial propaganda with the assistance of native elements resident in France—working men as well as soldiers. We published three numbers of the *Cuserne* in Arabic. The Tumsia Party organ founded by Comrade Louzon, which comes out regularly in Arabic is frequently prosecuted, but always appears again under a new title. Moreover, at the time of the parliamentary elections, the Algerian paper *La Lutte Sociale* had also Arabic editions in the

three provinces of Algiers, Oran and Constantine.

The Party put forward the candidature of our native comrade Ben Le Kahl Mahmoud, sent to prison in Mayence for his courageous action in the Ruhr. Our Seine Federation put forward Arabian comrade, Abd-El-Kader as candidate in Paris, and this candidature had repercussions even in Egypt; the echoes of which reached us in Paris.

This shows that there is a consensus of opinion in the French Party on the necessity to increase our efforts in the colonies. But this is a complicated organisational question which cannot be solved by a Congress speech, but requires the attention of a competent Commission.

We must (1) unite our efforts with those of our brother parties in Great Britain and Belgium, and (2) build up an apparatus for agitation and propaganda on the model of the apparatus which the International set up for the East and which is to-day one of the most powerful revolutionary levers.

It is only by carrying out these two stipulations that we shall be able to do justice to our task of emancipating the colonial peoples which are under the yoke of French imperialism.

**Rossi (Italy):** Our task is to strike at the capitalist power in its most vulnerable spot. According to Lenin's teaching, national and colonial problems stand on the same battleground as that on which the struggle of the world proletariat is being fought out.

Manuilsky has reminded the English and French parties that they have not developed these problems sufficiently. In our opinion the slogan for this whole subject should be: The struggle of exploited countries in alliance with the proletariat of exploiting countries against world imperialism.

The Fifth Congress should lay stress on the necessity for the development among Communist parties of tactics against

imperialistic policy.

Communists should combat the reformist and opportunistic tendencies which are common in some countries, and especially in England. These tendencies are the expression of the special interests of the aristocracy of labour which supports the aims of the imperialists in exploiting colonial peoples. The tendency to declare that the proletarian revolution alone is a means of solving national and colonial problems is an opportunist tendency used to conceal the desire not to be bothered with these problems.

In supporting the self-determination of nationalities we should be careful to make it clear that this does not justify us in forgetting the common struggle of the proletariat of those countries whose self-determination we demand, and we must not overlook the struggle against capitalism in these countries. Where questions of separatism or irredentism arise, Communists should support the proletariat of both the nationalities involved even if the Communist party is joining in the agitation for the separation of these nationalities.

The Fifth Congress should not be satisfied with giving a general appropriation to more or less detailed propositions, but should guarantee our colonial comrades a more careful attention in the future to work on colonial and national questions.

**Comrade Mann:** I desire to speak exclusively of the natives of the South African Union, which contains a population of 6,000,000 black men; one and a half million while men, of whom half are British and half are Dutch; and 600,000 “coloured persons,” that is, persons of mixed origin.

The Boer is primarily a farmer or a landowner. But owing the scarcity of land, the young Dutch farmers have been compelled to leave their farms and go into the mines. The gold mines of the Rand belong to the British. The real miners are the

natives, of which there are 230,000. These are supervised by 27,000 white men. Apart from the engineers and technical staff, 80 per cent. of the white men are Dutch, who have been forced into the mines by economic pressure. Their attitude towards the natives was cultivated on the farms, where the black man was a menial slave, frequently flogged with the shambok by the Boers. Although the British are not so accustomed to flogging the natives, they treat them as pariahs.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the native "boys" regard the whites with complete mistrust. In the industrial disputes that have occurred from time to time, the white men have never shown common cause with the natives. It now never occurs to the black men to expect the sympathy or support of the whites. It is doubtful whether they even desire it.

Most of the natives come from the kraal. But in Cape Town there is a native population, especially engaged in the ports, who have long been living in the towns. These have shown a capacity for organisation. During the war, 300 natives demanded a 50 per cent. increase on their wage of four shillings a day and went on strike when it was refused. The white men either held aloof or definitely sabotaged and the strike was smashed. Nevertheless, within a short time, these 300 had organised a union of 300,000, who this time demanded all increase of 100 per cent. on their wages and within three days obtained their full demands. This proves that the black man possesses proletarian courage, sticking power, and organising ability.

Because of my known sympathy with the blacks when I was in South Africa, I was invited to attend the convention of the Industrial and Commercial Union. The union consists solely of blacks, and is out to organise the port workers, the miners, the domestic workers, and other black workers of both sexes throughout the whole Union.

Only the black men will be able to help the black man, but

we white men should do everything in our power to help them organise.

**Comrade Brown:** I mount this tribune with some deference and only at the request of Comrade Zinoviev who said that the Congress was interested in Ireland. I have failed to notice it. The Congress seems interested only with those parties which have the largest membership. Yet there are other people.

The Irish proletariat rose in 1916, not 1917. They went out as conscious revolutionaries because they had educated themselves for many years as revolutionaries.

In Ireland we created an industrial army of the submerged proletariat and gave it political expression. In 1908 we organised the Irish Citizen Army. In 1914 we sent out a manifesto to the world proletariat to lay down the tools of industry and refuse to march in the name of kaisers, kings, and presidents.

We must smash imperialism or imperialism will smash us. Comrades, you have got to choose between the empires or the Federated Soviet Republic of the world.

I appeal to you, comrades, to turn your eyes to the Irish proletariat. We are not confined to Ireland. We have millions in England, Scotland, the United States, Australia and South Africa. It is the duty of the Communist International to get this great mass, mostly proletarians, interested in the great Communist movement.

**Nguyen-Ai-Quak (China):** In view of the enormous territory and population dominated by British and French imperialism, it is absolutely necessary that the British and French Parties should have a more active and energetic colonial policy if they do not wish the phrase “mass action” to remain sterile. Up to the present they have been inactive with regard to the colonial question and the Party press has not

given the important place it deserves to this serious problem.

That is the reason why I am venturing to put forward the following proposals, which, I believe to be immediately realisable.

1. To have a section for colonial discussion in *Humanité*.
2. To intensify propaganda and recruiting among natives.
3. To send natives to the Communist University at Moscow.
4. To organise the natives working in France.
6. To oblige, Party members to take an interest in colonial questions.

Comrades, as we speak in the name of Leninism, we must bend all our energies towards carrying out both with regard to , the colonial questions and to other questions the precious advice which Lenin gave us.

**Douglas (Great Britain):** The Second Congress laid down our lines of approach to this question and at each British Party Congress since then we have tried to go further forward on these lines. Criticisms of the British Party have been plentiful, but not very reasonable. The British Party is one of the weakest sections of the Communist International and it is confronted with one of the mightiest tasks which fall to any section. We recognise our responsibility, but our reports show the difficulty we have had in carrying out lines of communication even in Great Britain. Manuilsky said that we had done nothing about the Bombay strike, and the Cawnpore trial, but if he had read the *Workers' Weekly*, he would have seen what steady propaganda we have carried on, showing that the workers were not only oppressed economically by imperialism, but were also refused the right to organise themselves in their defence. The British Party defended the workers at the trial in Cawnpore and the Bombay strikers, and, succeeded in rallying together a large movement among trade unions its support.

Brown had stated that Ireland was not considered by the Communist International, but as a matter of fact the Communist International had given great attention to Ireland in conjunction with the British Party. Brown had asked the Communist International: "Are you with me?" We ask Brown: "Are you with us?" The 1916 rebellion in Ireland was not an unique, isolated affair; it was one of the many attempts of the world proletariat to stand on its own and fight; it part of the process created by the world imperialistic war. The movement towards Communism in Ireland has grown out of world conditions, out of greater forces than those which manifested themselves in Ireland in 1916, and it was essential to organise this movement to-day. The British Party know as well as Brown that the Irish proletariat was one of the most courageous in the world, and it must be brought into the world proletarian movement.

**Maximos:** The position of the Greek Party on the Macedonian question is not what Manuilsky says it is. Every national minority finds a defender in us, since the struggle of the national minorities is at the same time a struggle against the dominant class.

In Bulgaria, the Communists, under the leadership of Blagoev, defended the rights of the Greek minorities. while the Bulgarian Chauvinists were destroying the Greek minorities. For us the Macedonian question exists until the workers and peasants become their own masters.

It is true that we sent a letter to the Balkan Federation protesting that in issuing the slogan of the autonomy of Macedonia it failed to take into consideration the conditions of its application to Greece. After the Treaty of Lausanne, all the Turkish inhabitants of Macedonia were obliged to leave, and the Greek bourgeoisie installed 700,000 refugees in their place. The Greek Communist Party opposed, and will continue to



oppose this violence and the Treaty of Lausanne. We would be glad if the Turkish comrade did so also. But the fact remains that there are 700,000 Greek refugees in Macedonia.

The workers and peasants of Greece were, therefore, not prepared to accept the slogan of the autonomy of Macedonia.

The defects of the French Party have been exaggerated. The solutions proposed by Jaures were radically wrong. In 1905, he welcomed the Treaty of Algeciras, and in 1911, the Franco-German Treaty over Morocco, as proof of the possibility of conciliating the rival capitalists and avoiding war.

By developing the same line of politics, Jaures praised the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance, committing the same error as Kautsky in regard to the possibility of harmonising the capitalist interests and avoiding war under the capitalists' regime.

Very well, then, we must say it quite frankly (for our Party has sufficiently grown up to preclude any playing upon its sentimentality) that we are opposed to the Jaures tradition in this respect as in all other respects.

We do not wish to liberate the colonial peoples by making them participate in the bourgeois democracy within the bounds of the modern capitalist states, but by giving our support to the national liberation movements, by the extent of armed insurrection and the proclamation of [...]ments, by coordinating these colonial independence movements with the proletarian struggle in the metropolis, we shall destroy the base of exploitation and of imperialism.

**Vasiliev (Western Ukraine):** The national struggle of the Ukrainian and White Russian masses is closely bound up with the social and economic struggle of the landless and small peasants against the Polish landowners and bureaucrats. The only right position for the Communist Party is to demand the separation of the Ukrainian and White Russian lands from the

present Poland and for the restoration of the unity of Soviet Ukraine and Soviet White Russia. It, of course, must be emphasised that the best way of realising this is by means of the social revolution in Poland.

The Communist Party of West Ukraine at once gave the correct Leninist solution to the national question. Thanks to this, we were able almost completely to smash the petty bourgeois political groups ideologically and organisationally. Our influence on the toiling peasant masses is very strong, and the attempts at conducting political warfare against us find no response among the masses, which, by the way, is also to be explained by the sympathy of the petty bourgeois sections with the Soviet Government.

In addition to the campaign for separation and the fight for the schools the Communist Party of Western Ukraine is fighting for the acceptance into the trade unions of the Ukrainian proletariat, who, thanks to the social-chauvinist policy of the P.S.P., are at present outside the unions. We must also continue our work of inculcating nationalism into the workers of the three nations, drawing the attention of the Polish proletariat to the fact that the union of Western Ukraine to Soviet Ukraine will be a heavy blow to the Polish bourgeoisie and will bring nearer the social revolution in Poland.

**Comrade Georgescu:** Rumania is the classical example of a country where the national question can be used by the Communist Party in the interests of revolution. The Sixth Balkan Conference adopted the slogan of national self-determination including complete separation and this slogan has also been put into practice by us. That the Party has done good work is shown, among other things, by the violent persecution to which it was subjected after the Vienna conference.

I cannot understand why Comrade Manuilsky omitted to

mention the Bessarabian question, and the attitude of the Rumanian Party towards this question. He accused our Party of having failed to adopt a definite attitude to Hungarian irredentism. I wish to say on behalf of the Rumanian delegation that our attitude to this question was as definite and clear as our attitude to the Bessarabian question.

Comrade Manuilsky urged the Parties not only to support the national peasant and petty bourgeois parties, but also to encourage the establishment of such parties. I think that this question requires serious consideration, as the difference between supporting and establishing such parties is very great. I am convinced that the Rumanian Party also will be able in the future to make the proper use of the national question in the interests of the revolution.

**Comrade Copper (America):** I agree with Comrade Roy that the European and American Parties have not the correct idea of the colonial question. Comrade Brown is also right when he says that the West European parties pay very little attention to the national and colonial question. But I think that this accusation is justified only as far as some sections are concerned, but does not apply to the Comintern as a whole. The Comintern is better than its sections. For it has been the ideological leader of all its sections, including the comrades who came here with complaints. It is the Comintern which provided these comrades with a platform for the airing of their complaints. As to the Irish question, Comrade Lenin mentioned Ireland even during the imperialist war as a country where a revolutionary national war is possible. Comrade Roy went too far in his criticism of the tactics which the Comintern has hitherto applied. He goes too far by applying the standard of his Indian experiences to all other questions. Moreover, I do not think that even the Indian bourgeoisie, in its objective role, is counter-revolutionary to the extent of identifying its interests

with those of British imperialism. Even if the Indian bourgeoisie persecutes the proletariat of its country, its attitude towards British imperialism will always be objectively revolutionary.

Comrade Manuilsky was right in emphasising the revolutionary significance of the self-determination slogan. But I think that he paid too little attention to the other side of the question. The other slogan which we need is the slogan of complete equality between nations and even races. In many countries we are not in the position to separate the various nationalities or races in a way which would not rob the slogan of self-determination of its concrete meaning. This applies to the Negro question in America, or rather to the whole national question of the U.S.A., where the proletarians of 56 nationalities intermingle and cannot properly develop mainly because many of them are deprived of the press in their mother tongue, and are, therefore, deprived of proper leadership, Engels called a nation which is deprived of its leading sections a "nation without a history." In this sense, we are justified in calling the American proletariat a proletariat without a history. In this case the slogan of absolute equality is a truly revolutionary slogan.

In Australia the racial question is not connected with national self-determination, but rather with immigration facilities for "the coloured races." The same is the case in the Japanese-American conflict. I am, therefore, of the opinion that we should issue as a third and auxiliary slogan, the slogan of the right of free emigration and immigration.

Chinwa (China) said that the Chinese have to fight both foreign imperialists and the militarists inside their own country, who were really the agents of the imperialists. In the last 12 months imperialism had been at its zenith in China; as the following instance wowed.

(1) An American merchant Carmen, who was smuggling 60,000 silver dollars out of the country, fired on the military who attempted to stop him, and was killed by their return fire. China had to pay an indemnity of 50,000 dollars. (2) In Kanhow, 300 Chinese employees of an English cotton mill were dismissed for forming a trade union, and three of their officials were arrested. Demonstrations followed which were suppressed by British soldiers, and English warships threatened to bombard the town. Thirty-three workers were imprisoned. (3) The French Government has succeeded in forcing the Chinese government to pay the huge indemnity owing to the French for the Boxer affair in gold instead of in the depreciated paper franc. (4) Japan has retained the lease on Port Arthur and Dairen. (5) A group of bandits last year raided a train at Linchen and captured 100 Chinese and 20 foreigners. As a result the British, American, Japanese, French and Italian Ministers demanded and obtained from the Chinese government an indemnity of 18,700 dollars for each captured foreigner, the organisation of a "railway protection force" (really a railway control force) under foreign commanders, and the dismissal of various high officials. (6) The Chinese Government has been forced by the Great Powers to permit the export of cotton. (7) The British-American Tobacco Co., manufacturing cigarettes in China from Chinese tobacco, enjoys complete immunity from taxation, at a loss of 200,000,000 dollars to the Chinese revenue. (8) England sent 20 warships to Canton in an attempt to release the customs' dues collected by Sun-Yat-Sen. (9) England, Franco, Japan, America, and Italy have planned a naval base on the Yangtse river.

The arrogance of imperialism has led to the growth of the nationalist movement, in which Communists are beginning to take the leadership. They have already brought the Koumingtang into contact with the masses and introduced the

mass idea. All Party members are instructed to join the Koumintang and to transform it from an organisation seeking to conquer territory by force of arms into an organisation really representing the masses. Sun-Yat-Sen has actively aided this work. The Communists now play all influential part on the Executive and among the membership.

The political programme recently adopted by the Koumintang demands the abolition of foreign control in China, the abrogation of unjust agreements with foreign powers, the repudiation of the loans made to the irresponsible Peking government, universal suffrage, freedom of speech, of association, and of the press, labour laws, re-organisation of agrarian life, and nationalisation of transport. Foreign powers are to return their concessions; the revenue thus obtained will be used to end banditry.

The Koumintang has become powerful enough to provoke the hostility of the Peking government—several Communists have been arrested and three have been shot. The Communist Party itself has to work illegally except in the extreme South. It is a small party with a vast task before it. Its aim are to get the leadership both of the labour movement and of the nationalist movement. In the Koumintang it hopes to develop a true revolutionary mass movement.

**Amter (America):** The workers in imperialist countries are not interested in the Negro question. They are living to a great extent on the profits derived by the bourgeoisie from the colonies, and, therefore, are opposed to movements for the liberation of the colonies or the betterment of the status of colonial people. They fear a reduction in their own standard of living if the colonial people are freed.

In the U.S.A., the problem of the Negro is primarily an agrarian problem and not an industrial one alone. The Negro is most often a tenant farmer, and he belongs to the most

impoverished class in the U.S.A. He pays his rent by means of his crop, and must get all his supplies from the merchant or the landowner, who alone keeps the accounts. This means that he is always in debt, and is bound to his landlord for life. At last he is driven down to the class of peon and must work for life for his owner. At present, owing to the fact that farming in the U.S.A. is chiefly one-crop farming, and that the cotton crops which the Negroes largely grow, have been affected by the boll weevil, the Negro tenant farmers are degraded to a condition lower than that of slaves. In industry they have sometimes been used as strikebreakers, but where they are recognised by the white workers, they stand firmly beside them, as was shown in the steel strike and the miners' strike. There are in the U.S.A. 488 Negro local unions.

What should we demand for the Negroes? The Negroes must make their own demands. They should first organise a general conference demanding admission to the regular unions. The American Federation of Labour is opposed to this in reality, although it pretends the contrary. Then the Negroes in Africa and in America must be linked up together by propaganda. The intellectual leadership of the Negroes is in New York, and the movement could be led by the press of the United States. But the English press does not reach the African Negro, therefore, sailors should take pamphlets, suitably written for the native, to Africa and thus start propaganda there. They must be met on their own ground. Where-over Negro troops have been organised by the imperialistic powers, these troops should demand to have their own commanders, and, in the African colonies, not to be used outside the colonies, for it must never be forgotten that the main use of black troops in the future will be that of shock troops of the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat.

**Faplouk (Turkey):** Comrades, the national question in

Turkey takes four different forms: (1) the relation of the proletariat to revolutionary nationalism in its positive aspects—political and economic. (2) The relation of the proletariat to revolutionary nationalism in its negative aspects—i.e., the struggles against imperialism for national emancipation and the struggles against mediaeval and feudal institutions. (3) The relation of the proletariat to minorities. (4) The relation of the proletariat to imperialistic nationalism. Comrade Manuilsky has criticised us for our tendency to co-operate with the bourgeoisie. This is unjust; there has been a misunderstanding and we have laid our case before the Programme Commission and await the solution of the question. The Turkish proletariat, following the purely proletarian ideology, has collaborated and will collaborate again, only with revolutionary nationalism—that is to say, in order to get the capitulations abolished, to overcome imperialistic capitalist oppression, and to make every effort for doing away with the Sultanate, the Khalifat religious institutions, etc. But all for co-operating to give power to the bourgeoisie, that we shall never do. Only a few of our comrades thought they saw the possibility of State and Municipal Socialism within the framework of bourgeois democracy, but to-day that Utopia has also been eliminated.

With regard to minorities, we oppose every form of national oppression. The question of minorities has been remarkably simplified: the Christian minorities in Turkey are, only 5 or 6 per cent. of the whole population, and the laws now existing give the same citizen-rights to every inhabitant of the Republic.

**Comrade Radek:** I wish to rectify a legend which has been spread here. Comrade Sommer took upon himself the trouble to argue against the Radek standpoint upon the national question in Germany. Now, there is no Radek standpoint, but there is the standpoint of the Communist International, which



was stated in the resolution published by *Rote Fahne* of the 13<sup>th</sup> of May.

This declaration about Schlageter bore the signature of Comrades Thalmann, Maslov, and, Ruth Fischer.

**(Ejaculation by Sommer:** It was not a Schlageter declaration, but a quite proper declaration.)

**Radek:** The Schlageter speech was made at the Enlarged Executive with the written consent of the Chairman of the Executive. At that meeting on behalf of the Executive, I rejected the views that are advocated here by Comrade Sommer, and which were represented by Comrade Neurath at the Enlarged Executive. Furthermore, Comrades Ruth Fischer and Remmele delivered speeches in Germany, in which they expressed the same point of view, but in a much cruder form. The Communist International has the right to change its standpoint if it turns out to be incorrect. But in changing the standpoint there is no need to start the fabrication of legends which purport to represent the standpoint of the Executive as the personal standpoint of a member of the Presidium.

**Comrade Sommer (Germany):** Since Comrade Radek has spoken about a legend supposedly spread by me, I must reply. Firstly, the declaration of *Rote Fahne* which was quoted by Comrade Radek, was a perfectly correct Marxian declaration. The Schalgeter speech contained merely an implication of the policies which I have criticised. Even to-day I consider it was a mistake on the part of the Executive to agree to that speech. On the other hand, Comrade Radek in an article in *Rote Fahne* stated that it was not only our duty to carry on clear Communist propaganda among the middle classes, in order to win them over to our side, but also to form an alliance with the section of the middle class who cling to their

nationalist ideology, in order to go part of the way with them. I have yet to learn that this kind of attitude has the authority of the Executive. I wish to point out that in *Die Internationale* Comrade Thalheimer published Radek's statement together with a reproduction of my article, without committing the editor either to one standpoint or the other.

**Comrade Radek:** Comrade Sommer agreed with the Schlageter speech, but not with the Schlageter article. I beg leave to quote Comrade Zinoviev's letter of the 20th of June, that is after the publication of the article, in which he wrote: "Your articles about Schlategar are good and proper." This shows that Comrade Zinoviev was fully in agreement with the whole Schlageter campaign.

At this point the Session was adjourned.



## Twenty-Third Session, July 2nd

**Chairman: WYNKOOP.**

### **Report on Fascism by Comrade Bordiga.**

**Bordiga:** I presented to the Fourth Congress a report on the question of Fascism dealing with a very decisive period of the history of fascism in Italy, that is to say, with the conquest of power by Mussolini. I must deal now with another phase of the fascist development which is connected, as you know, with the Matteotti affair.

At this juncture it is of particular interest to study this important social and-political phenomenon.

Fascism began in the agricultural district. This is a characteristic fact. The attack on the positions of the red proletariat began in Italy in the agricultural districts. But while it is true that fascism began in the non-industrial districts we must not imagine that it is purely a movement in the interests of the agrarian bourgeoisie and of the big landowners. On the contrary, it is a movement which represents also the interests of the big industrial, financial and commercial bourgeoisie. It is an attempt at counter-revolutionary unity of all the forces of the bourgeoisie. At the first glance, fascism does not seem to be an organisation of the important social classes which we have just named. It rather appears as a movement of the middle classes, of war veterans, of bourgeois intellectuals and of all other sections which the proletariat could not bring over to its side.

Fascism is not a revolutionary movement. It is rather a movement for the preservation of what exists already, and it does not present a new programme. It merely brings forward a new factor which was entirely lacking in the old parties, a

formidable fighting organisation, both political and military.

What are the relations between fascism and the proletariat?

Its name alone shows that it is an anti-socialist and therefore, an anti-proletarian movement. From beginning to end it appears as the destroyer of even the smallest gains of the working class. But fascism is not the old extreme right reaction with its concomitants of martial law, terror, emergency legislation and official prohibition of red and revolutionary organisations, it is something more than that. It is a more modern, cunning movement which endeavours at the same time to do propaganda among the masses, and even adopts the principle of trade union organisation. It endeavours to form economic workers' organisations. It is self-evident that we cannot compare these trade union organisations with the red trade unions. But we must admit that this is a very strong theoretical argument against trade unions and even against revolutionary trade unions and even against revolutionary trade unionism, which maintains that the most effective weapon for the proletarian struggle is economic organisation. Facts have shown us that this weapon can be very well used for counter-revolutionary purposes.

In fact, fascism has merely adopted, but in a new form, the old platform of left bourgeois parties and of the social democrats, namely, class co-operation. Fascism in the same fashion also exploits national and patriotic ideology.

Summarising the facts which characterised the fascist conquest of power, Comrade Bordiga said: We did not have armed action but a mobilisation of fascism which threatened a revolutionary seizure of power, and a sort of defensive mobilisation by the State which even declared martial law at a certain moment. But this resistance did not materialise. Armed action did not take place; we had a compromise instead.

The Fascists say: We can make this revolution whenever we like. But revolution is not a thing which can be done at

will, neither is it at the disposal even of the boldest of political leaders, for even he can not make events happen whenever he wills it.

Therefore, no revolution took place. There was a change in the leadership of the bourgeois class, but this change does not represent a change of the programme of the Italian bourgeoisie, neither from the economic and social, nor from the home policy point of view.

Bordiga reviewed the economic situation in Italy, under the fascist regime and showed that in reality it has become worse, for to-day the lira is lower than it ever was before. Mussolini's contention is that it could have fallen lower still, if it had not been for fascism: an utterly worthless argument.

The fascist government has not kept its promises, and there is great disillusionment in the class on whose support fascism depended, namely the middle class.

I want to deal now with the methods of the fascist government towards the real proletariat. These methods are very serious for us, for our comrades have been charged as common criminals for actions which were in reality sanguinary encounters between the fascists and the proletariat.

Fascists enjoy complete immunity even if there is overwhelming evidence against them. But terrible sentences are passed on workers who dared to defend themselves against fascist attacks. There is an amnesty which acquits all those who committed crimes for a national purpose. This amnesty is, of course, extended to only fascists, while revolutionaries are kept in prison and recently were sentenced to 10 and 20 years.

Then he dealt with the Matteotti affair and spoke of the conditions under which the Socialist defeat took place. The discontent which began to develop in the sections of the population deceived by fascism, spread after this event.

At the beginning, all the opposition parties, including even the Communist Party, took part in parliamentary protests. But

since then the Parties have divided. The parliamentary Communist fraction dissociated itself from the declarations made by the other parties. All the other Parties, including even the Maximalists, formed a joint committee of parliamentary opposition. In connection with this, a very peculiar thing happened. The Communist Party proposed the general strike as a protest against the assassination of Matteotti. Strikes had already broken out spontaneously. But all the other Parties were, of course, opposed to the proposal of the Communist Party, and advocated a 10 minutes' strike. But even fascist and employers' organisations were in favour of this proposal! Thereby this strike was deprived of all political and class importance. It is self-evident that the Communists alone proposed the right form of protest with which the assassination of Matteotti should have been met.

The problem which confronts the revolutionaries is as follows: "How are we to use this situation and what is to be our attitude? The Party must insist on the autonomous role which was assigned to it. It must adopt the slogan of the liquidation of all anti-fascist oppositions, and must replace them by an open and direct action of the Communist movement. There are certain facts which have given prominence to our Party. Since the election and since other manifestation and demonstrations of the activity and vitality of our Party, our adversaries have adopted a different language towards us. The fascist press wants to enter into polemics with us almost daily in connection with the Matteotti affair, and this draws public attention to our Party and to its task which differs from all the other opposition movements.

The Communist Party is the only Party which offers to the masses means of action capable of putting an end to the present situation. We must carry out our task of agitation in opposition to the Socialist and Maximalist parties. Naturally we must not depend only on politics, but must rally and unite the masses. It

is only when we shall have achieved this unity of the masses that we shall have found the right foundation for the development of our struggle against fascism.

Other means must be used than an attack led by a terrorist minority! We never had faith in such tactics, and if there is a political movement which by its critical and political attitude endeavours to liquidate the illusion of effective action by terrorist minorities, it is our Party.

We are convinced that revolutionary success can be achieved only by bringing into motion the masses, the working class and its allies—the peasants which must be led by the Communist Party, which must be the general staff of the proletariat.

For the struggle against fascism abroad Italian Communists do not depend on the hypocritical support of the foreign bourgeoisie, on a moral campaign, but rather on the revolutionary solidarity of the workers of all countries in the struggle against bourgeois reaction and world fascism.

## **Twenty-Fourth Session, July 2nd (Evening)**

**Chairman: WYNKOOP.**

### **Supplementary Report on Fascism, by Comrade Freimuth.**

**Comrade Freimuth:** The essence of fascism was not brought out sufficiently, clearly and sharply either in the report of Comrade Bordiga or in the printed report which has been presented to you.

Fascism is not an attempt on the part of the petty bourgeoisie to conduct their own policy, as the printed report says. The essential fact of fascism is the fighting organisation which the bourgeoisie have created for the purpose of crushing the revolution in a counter-revolutionary struggle to secure the existence of capitalist society. Fascism is the weapon of the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat. Of course, the petty bourgeoisie and the middle class citizens are the material from which the weapon is forged. But it is not important out of which material an instrument is made, but rather the purpose which the instrument is to serve; and fascism serves no other purpose than to maintain and secure the class domination of the bourgeoisie.

We have noted that German fascism in essence passed through four phases, in each of which it differed essentially and adopted essentially different methods and forms of struggle, before it became what it is to-day.

The first phase embraces the period from Ebert to Kapp, i.e., from the first "revolutionary" government up to the Kapp



putsch. We here see how the first fascist organisations sprang up, which, it is true, did not bear the impress and the features of fascism in its present-day form, but which were nevertheless the organisations which have persisted to the present day, and which are led by the same persons. In those days the voluntary corps were created as the first organisations directed against the revolutionary proletariat.

The Kapp putsch which marked the second phase terrified the pacifist democratic government and the government departments and they were now obliged to take up the fight against the very Freikorps which they themselves had created. They called upon the workers for a general strike, and against the opposition of the working class, the military domination and the dictatorship, which Kapp wanted to establish, foundered. During the second phase all the elements which were active or sympathetic in the Kapp putsch and whose organisations were destroyed rallied again in new secret organisations.

We find being used the fighting methods common to all secret organisations: putsches, surprise attacks, and all the essential fighting methods of individual terrorism and individual murder. It was in this period that Erzberger and Rathenau were murdered.

This phase of fascism lasted up to the period when the time had come for German fascism to become a movement.

In the third phase we find fascism growing into a mass movement to which we must give the most serious attention. After the elections to the Reichstag, we heard it said that the end of fascism was at last not far off. I must issue a note of warning against such assertions, especially in view of the fact that this mass movement had grown up not during the space of the six years glorious existence of the republic, but in a space of 20 months, and nevertheless has achieved the great success we are witnessing.

The fascist movement is beginning to form political parties, the first of them in the south, the Nationalist Labour Party. It is, therefore, turning first to the workers and hopes to find in them the storm troops of its counter-revolutionary plan.

The second party was set up in the north, the German Nationalists Freedom Party (Deutschölkische Freiheitspartei). The movement took the name of *Freiheitspartei* from the national movement of 1813. Both these parties based their policy on the complete collapse of bourgeois society in Germany. And the very petty bourgeois parties which the fascist, political parties are attacking, assisted to bring about the political period of fascism. The political programme of fascism shows how it has drawn the best arguments for its policy and the burden of reparations. As regards foreign policy, fascism and its political organisation demand the non-fulfilment of the Versailles Treaty, a war of revenge against France, England and in fact, against all the countries which are oppressing Germany. The policy is active opposition to the occupation of the Ruhr, as opposed to the policy of passive resistance which was conducted by the Cuno government. The internal policy of fascism is briefly as follows: opposition to Marxism, the Jews, profiteering capitalism, and parliamentarism, and for the dictatorship of the *Völkische*.

The fascists have a labour programme, a middle class programme, and an agrarian programme, in fact programmes for all the lections of society necessary to build up a mass movement. The first point of the labour programme is the demand for the eight-hour day. They demand a social insurance far superior to what has been regarded as social insurance hitherto. They demand the abolition of classes. Within fascist society, employers and employed, capitalist and workers, are to belong to one family, and are to have the same rights and the same duties within society. They preach phrases regarding the necessity for productive capital, as opposed to Jewish capital

and finance capital. They preach the community of labour, the necessity for unions in which the employer and the factory worker shall be united. Henry Ford, the great American capitalist, is their ideal, and his system of exploitation is to be introduced into Germany. Just as for the working class, fascism in Germany has a programme for the middle classes, which are to be just as much protected by social insurance as the working class. Similarly with the agrarian programme, and the peasant programme. In these they preach that every landworker and every peasant must possess his own homestead and be emancipated from servitude to the Jews.

What did we Communists do in that period when bourgeois society in Germany was threatened with disruption and collapse? It is true, at our conferences we presented a great plan, an economic picture of what had happened to Germany as a result of the occupation of the Ruhr. We came to political decisions. But we did nothing as to the actions we should have taken to solve the problems which came up at the congresses in Essen and Frankfurt. It was only after fascism had mobilised itself everywhere that we began an energetic anti-fascist propaganda which culminated in the Anti-Fascist Day at the end of June. It was then proved that fascism was composed only of moods. During this period the fascist organisations did not dare to come out openly, for the Communist movement held a powerful fist in their faces. However, there were all sorts of false ideas prevalent in our Party, from top to bottom, which prevented the fruits being derived from the movement connected with the Anti-Fascist Day. In the Berlin organisation, which had planned to carry out the Anti-Fascist Day in monarchist Potsdam, the order was issued: Do not go to Potsdam, for you run the risk of getting your heads broken. In spite of this mistake, Anti-Fascist Day was one of the most brilliant actions of the proletariat against counter-revolution.

The third phase of fascism culminated in the Hitler putsch.

I think it is a mistake to speak of a Hitler “putsch.” It was rather a great and extensive insurrectionary movement which with some political intelligence might have been led to some definite purpose. For the first time the fascists marched into battle and in one moment the host was laid. Let us take in contrast the fight which the revolutionary proletariat of Hamburg fought a few days before. For three days and three night, 200 revolutionary fighters held back all the murderous instruments of war, bayonets, rifles, machine guns, and tanks which were brought out against them. This fight—in contrast to the Hitler rising—proves that the revolutionary fight in Germany has every prospect of success. The revolutionary fight is being carried on by the enthusiasm in the revolutionary proletariat which in spite of defeats is always ready to take up the fight once more. Similar objective circumstances as existed in October and with the resolute leadership of the Communist Party, the task facing the revolutionary proletariat will be fulfilled.

In the fight against fascism, our party, like the fraternal parties, has committed errors. During the Kapp Putsch we declared neutrality: we thereby committed the same mistake as our Bulgarian friends in June. But this error was very soon made good by the fighting proletariat. The working class passed from the passive resistance of the general strike to active defence against the counter-revolution and against the existence of the old counter-revolutionary Social-Democratic government. For the first time we heard of a Red Army in Germany, created by the fighting revolutionary proletariat. We now perceive in the tendencies which were expressed in the Schlageter article and in the whole campaign, a deviation from the methods which we should have used in the fight against counter-revolutionary methods which we should have used in the fight against counter-revolution and that special form counter-revolution, fascism.

The same applies to the purely mechanical point of view that in Germany either Communism or fascism must dominate.

The proposals which we make for the fight against fascism in the future are as follows:

(1) The exposure of the fascist programme in parliament. We must carry on a vigorous propaganda in parliament for the demands which the fascists put forward in their own programme, thus placing the fascists in the dilemma of being obliged to carry out their programme wherever possible.

(2) Subordination of the anti-fascist propaganda to the party central committees of the various countries.

(3) An active propaganda among the small peasants and middle classes within the parties in which these sections are particularly numerous.

4) An active fight against the international treaties, reparations, the Experts' Report, etc.

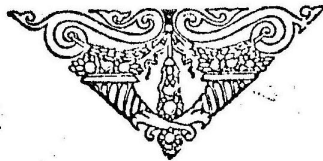
(5) The creation of fighting organisations against fascism.

(6) An active fight and counter-demonstration against the "German Days" and against the monarchist demonstrations of the fascists.

(7) Public disputes with the fascists.

(8) A determined fight against fascism and democracy for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

After the report of Comrade Freimuth the Session was closed.



## Twenty-Fifth Session, July 3rd

**Chairman: SMERAL**

### **AGRARIAN QUESTION.**

**Reporter, COMRADE KOLAROV.**

#### **Discussion on Agrarian Question.**

**Speakers:** HGUEN AI-QUAK, VARGA, ORDOUT, BRINGFOL, AMTER, WOLF, POPESCU.

After the opening of the Session by Comrade Smeral, Comrade Torgashov welcomed the Congress on behalf of the proletarian students.

Then the next item on the agenda was on the Agrarian Question Report by Comrade Kolarov.

**Comrade Kolarov:** Comrades, the agrarian question was brought up at the Second Congress and nearly all the subsequent Congresses under different aspects. At the Second Congress the general program of the Comintern on the agrarian question was the main topic; at the Fourth Congress attention was paid to the elaboration of a program of action on the agrarian field. The Fifth Congress occupies itself with the political and revolutionary strength of the peasant masses. Communist parties are mass parties, and the social revolution for which they work can come only as a result of revolutionary action by the masses. The question is to find these masses. Generally speaking, for us the masses are first and foremost in

the towns. This is the proletarian class. But apart from the proletarian class, in nine out of ten countries, there are masses also in the countryside. We have only to study the statistics to see that it is so.

In Great Britain only 9 per cent. of those who participate in production are employed in agriculture. It is the most industrialised country in the world. In Belgium there are already 23 per cent. In Bulgaria 83 per cent. of the population are peasants. In Germany about 29 per cent. of the population is employed in agriculture. In Denmark 82.6 per cent.; in Italy 59.4 per cent. of the population are peasants. In Norway there are 29.8 per cent. peasants; in France 41.2 per cent.; in Holland 29 per cent.; in Switzerland 31 per cent.; in Sweden 50 per cent.; in Austria (former Austria) 56.8 per cent.; in Hungary, including Croatia and Slovenia (pre-war Hungary) 64.3 per cent.; in Spain 56.3 per cent.; in the U.S.A. 32.3 per cent.; in Japan 64 per cent.; in China 60 per cent.; and in the present Yugoslavia 80 per cent.

But it is not enough to produce figures. An analysis from the view point of the differentiation between classes will be useful, and by taking a few countries as a typical example, we shall arrive at the following results:

In Germany, of the 29 per cent. who work in the rural districts, 12 per cent. work for themselves, 13 per cent. are semi-proletarians, and 75 per cent. are agricultural labourers and employees. Thereby you see that in Germany the peasant question presents itself to us Communists, first and foremost under the aspects of the capture of the agricultural labourers. In France, of the 41.2 per cent. which constitute about 8½ million peasants, 60 per cent. work for wages, and 40 per cent. for themselves. Thus you see that in France the peasant question appears under the aspect not only of the capture of agricultural labourers, but also of the capture of small peasants and small farmers who work for themselves. In Yugo-Slavia, Croatia and

Slovenia, 85 per cent. of the population are engaged in agriculture. And of this population, 72 per cent. own plots of land not exceeding five hectares. These are semi-proletarians or small peasants. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, where 86 per cent. of the population are engaged in agriculture, 77 per cent. own plots of land not exceeding 5 hectares.

In Japan 64 per cent. of the population are engaged in agriculture, of these 70 per cent. are farmers or small proprietors and farmers at the same time 89 per cent. of proprietors own plots of land not exceeding 2 hectares.

These figures show us that a large section of the working masses to be captured by us for the social revolution, is to be found in the country-side. History has shown us the importance of the peasant masses for the revolution. It is a well-known fact that all the urban revolutionary movements of the past were crushed by the bourgeoisie with the help of peasant masses. We have the example of the Paris Commune. We have also the example of the Russian revolution in 1905, in which the great movement of the workers of St. Petersburg, Moscow, and all the other great Russian towns was crushed by Cossacks and by soldiers, who, properly speaking, are nothing but peasants. This historical fact has been recognised by great revolutionary writers, such as Karl Marx, and Paul La Fargue. But the Social-Democrats soon forgot this revolutionary tradition and abandoned this viewpoint entirely.

Comrade Lenin, during the revolution of 1905, when Russia was on the eve of a bourgeois and democratic revolution, realised the importance of the capture of the peasant masses for the revolutionary movement, and issued the slogan: "The dictatorship of the proletariat and of the peasantry. As soon as the bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia is achieved with the help of the workers and peasants, it must serve as the prologue to the Socialist revolution in the west." In 1917, when the situation in Russia was; in the opinion of



Lenin, ripe for the Socialist revolution, he substituted the slogan of the “Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Poor Peasants” for the old slogan of the “Dictatorship of the Peasants.” But the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the poor peasantry meant already a Socialist revolution in Russia itself.

The initiative of the rapprochement between workers and peasants must come from the Communist parties and the Communist International. The peasants will not come to us on their own initiative, and if they be really inclined to effect a rapprochement with us, their enthusiasm is sure to flag if the Communist parties and the Communist International do not make any efforts to attract them with the object of uniting them politically and organically with the revolutionary movement.

I come now to the tactics which must be followed by the Communist Parties in their work for the capture of the peasant masses. We must differentiate between two questions: The first question is the capture of the masses as such, and the capture of the unorganised amorphous masses. The second question is our tactics in connection with the economic, political, cultural and other peasant organisations which exist almost in every country and which are developing rapidly. At the Fourth Congress we dealt with the necessity of a program of action for the capture of the masses, but the existence of peasants’ organisations and of political peasant parties was almost entirely neglected, and we have not formulated, up to the present day, any general rule concerning our tactics towards these peasant organisations.

We have in the first place trade union organisations of agricultural labourers. Our tactics towards these organisations must, of course, be determined by our general trade union tactics. But we must lay special emphasis on the possibility of influencing agricultural labourers through the medium of the small peasants among whom they live, and *vice versa*.

Another form of organisation is the organisation of small

farmers which to a certain extent is a trade union organisation. Opportunities must be found to connect this sort of organisation with the trade union organisation of agricultural labourers. But on the other hand we must establish a direct connection between these organisations and the Communist Party: we must also do our utmost to get them affiliated to the International Peasant Council. Nuclei must be formed in these organisations by means of which Communist control must be gained within them. For the purpose of winning over their members, we must practice the united front from below and from above at the same time. There are, thirdly, organisations of small peasants and peasant unions in the various countries. Generally speaking, these organisations are of a very heterogeneous social character. What must be our attitude towards them? We must endeavour to eliminate from the leading organs of these unions the rich peasantry, and must see to it that their leadership be in the hands of poor peasants. Our method of action must be the establishment of nuclei in these organisations and the practice of the united front from below in every case, and from above, in some cases.

In the co-operatives and agricultural unions we must apply practically the same tactics of Communist permeation and we must endeavour to form a left opposition wing eliminating the control of the rich peasantry. The same may be said in connection with other organisations of a cultural and sportive character, etc.

But the question becomes more difficult when it comes to determining our attitude toward peasant unions of a predominately political character. We have such parties in Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, Bulgaria, and Croatia, and also in other countries. As their united front tactics are evidently applied from below, opportunities must be found to get into contact with the masses organised in these parties by means of these tactics.

We have such an opportunity for instance, in Bulgaria, in the case of the peasant union, most of whose membership is already imbued with a revolutionary spirit. In connection with this union, the united front can and must be applied from below as well as from above. Under certain conditions, the same solution may be necessary for the republican peasant party of Croatia, the Farmer-Labour Parties in the U.S.A., etc.

The International Peasants Council, which was established in Moscow as a result of the first International Peasant Council, is of great political and revolutionary importance. This initiative must be welcomed by the Communist International. The efforts of the International Peasant Council to rally to its banner all the more or less revolutionary peasant organisations, to encourage the radicalisation and the revolutionisation of the peasant movement born spontaneously in all countries as a consequence of the world war, of the industrial crisis, and of bourgeois reaction which is raging, etc., must receive the support of the International.

***Comrade Nguyen Ai-Quack (Indo-China):*** Industry and commerce are very little developed in the French colonies. Out of a total population of 55,571,000 natives, 95 per cent. are peasants. They are abominably exploited. Here are a few facts.

The French concessionaires, in addition to obtaining free grants of land of an area from 20 to 25 thousand hectares, obtain also the facilities for exploitation and the use of the labour power of the inhabitants.

The spoliatory administration is backed by the thievish church. By corruption, perfidy and usury, the Catholic church of Cochinchina has appropriated one-fourth of the arable land of the colony.

By direct or indirect operations, the Bank of Algiers and Tunis in 1914 made a profit of 12,258,000 francs on a capital of 25,000,000 francs.

The Franco-Algerian Company possess 324,000 hectares of the best lands; the Cafsa Phosphate And Railway Company has obtained 30,000 hectares of mines, including an option on 20,000,000 hectares situated around these mines, and so on.

French colonisation has caused collective property to disappear, replacing it by private property. The misery of the native population is appalling. Even in years of good harvests, the peasants fight the dogs for the contents of the garbage cans in the towns. In case of harvest failure they perish by famine on the plains and highways.

The International should, help these unfortunate peasants to organise; the International should give them leaders. The International should show them the way to revolution and emancipation.

Comrade Varga: Already at the Fourth Congress I pointed out that the outstanding feature in the situation of the peasantry, and of the agricultural population in general, is the elusive nature of class divisions. Whereas, in industry it is quite clear and plain who is the wage worker, who is the small master, and who is the capitalist; whereas in industry it is next to impossible for the small master to become a big capitalist, yet in agriculture there is a constant passing from one class to another. The reason is that the most important means of production in agriculture, the land and the soil, can be divided without any particular detriment to production, while in industry a division of a large factory, of an increase of a small workshop into a gigantic factory, is technically impossible. The elusive nature of the class divisions makes it necessary to study with more detail the actual concrete relations, if we want to achieve effective results.

Yet another question. What shall be the attitude of the Communist Party, if in a capitalist country there is a strong movement among the peasants in favour of buying out part of the soil from the large landowners?

I am of the opinion that the Communists should support a movement of this kind, while endeavouring to extend the demands raised by the peasantry. If the peasants ask for a division of the land at reasonable prices, the Communist Party must say: We support you, but we raise the further demand for the confiscation of the land and for its free distribution among the peasants.

We are told by comrades of the left-radical wing that if the peasants obtain land, they cease to be a revolutionary element. It is an extremely dangerous political theory. Of course, we cannot control history to the extent of bringing about the ideal developments whereby the revolutionary peasantry would obtain the land without compensation from the proletarian dictatorship by synchronising the peasants' and workers' revolution. We must assume the risk of such an agrarian movement being successful before the conquest of power by the proletariat, and in such case it will be impossible to win the peasantry for our aims if we would reject or stay neutral towards their demands from all ends. Only by supporting the peasantry, while giving a revolutionary trend to their demands, can we hope to gain the latent revolutionary forces of the peasantry to our side.

We must enter into closer contact with the peasant organisations which are following our road and are desirous of emancipating themselves from the bourgeoisie, and must use this movement against the bourgeoisie. In this way we must endeavour to weaken the front of the enemy. If we, however, strive to lead the peasants back into the path of economic organisations, it will check the urge for the creation of political organisations, which from our point of view is desirable in many countries. For instance, in Germany, where the peasantry is demanding the creation of a political organisation, our comrades said: No, only economic organisations. The result was that our German comrades, in spite of the peasantry and

their demandings, fought for a political organisation and refused even to accept Communist peasants as their candidates. And it is by no means surprising that Seeckt also fought against this striving of the peasantry and that thus an united front was created between our comrades and Seeckt, which compelled the peasantry to go over to the side of the fascists. This attitude towards the peasant organisations is not permissible. The Fifth Congress must give a reply to this question, for otherwise we shall only talk and make no progress in our practical work.

**Comrade Bringfol (Switzerland):** Switzerland is a small country, but it has a highly developed peasantry with a strong peasants' organisation led by Doctor Lauer, which has international connections, and whose aims, transcend beyond the borders of Switzerland. One of its chief slogans is the fight against industrialism and for the return to agriculture. Lauer has connections not only with Doctor Heim, but he also attended the conferences at Paris in order to carry out these aims internationally. We must understand that the peasants, at least in Switzerland, are not only amenable to practical proposals, as it used to be universally asserted, but they fall also quite easily for the demagogical slogans and utopian proposals of their leaders. This is possibly due to the fact that their leaders are astute enough to use the whole machinery of the bourgeois state for the maintenance of peasant agriculture.

In our propaganda we must learn to differentiate between the methods which we have to use with regard to the peasants of the East and those which we have to use in the West.

The question of land plays no part whatever in Southern Germany and in Switzerland. Here we are confronted mainly with the question of relieving the peasantry of the burden of mortgage-interest, and of obtaining fixed prices for agricultural products. This question must be examined in all its bearings. Furthermore, in districts where there are no small or middle

peasants, and where industrial workers are living in agricultural districts, we should send industrial propaganda among the peasants. We have found from experience that in spite of the fierce propaganda that is conducted against the working class among the peasants, we succeeded in obtaining the support of a fairly large number of peasants in industrial districts to the proposition of the eight-hour day for industrial workers, when the plebiscite was taken. We must systematically furnish to the peasants the materials dealing with the Russian revolution. It should be the business of the Comintern and of the Program Commission, and above all, of the Peasants' Council, to discuss the things that are to be done by us among the peasants of the East and of the West.

The second part of the slogan of the peasants' and workers' government will remain a phrase as long as our peasant propaganda is not put on quite a solid basis, and as long as the Communist parties do not see clearly the manner in which the propaganda among the peasants should be conducted.

**Comrade Amter (America):** The agrarian problem in America is one of the most important the Communists have to face, which the following facts will indicate: in 1910, 33 per cent. of those gainfully employed were agricultural workers. In 1920 this number did not increase in proportion to the increase of population, but actually decreased to 26 per cent. of those gainfully employed. The output of the farmers has increased in 20 years by 37 per cent. but the number engaged in farming by only 5 per cent. This indicates that there has been an increase in efficiency in farming methods, but not that the American farmer is in a better position than before. The contrary is true. Since 1880 the number of tenant farmers increased from 25 per cent. to 38 per cent. of the total number of farmers. The American farmer pays 16 per cent. of his income in taxes. He must pay interest on his mortgages. He must pay high

transportation costs to carry his produce to the market sometimes amounting to 34 per cent of the value of the produce. He must pay the elevator companies 10 per cent. for storing his grain. The farmer gets about one-third of the average income of the industrial worker.

In America the farmers do not constitute a distinct class. Farms are changing hands continually, and many farms are occupied by men who only recently took to farming. Country banks are failing because the farmers find it impossible to pay their mortgages, which increased from 4 billion dollars in 1920 to a total of 7 billion, 800 millions in 1924. The banks or the state are not even attempting to collect interest or taxes. There are 2 million agricultural workers in America who are unorganised except for 11,000 in the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.). The poor farmers are a political factor. They are one of the most oppressed and exploited classes in America and are in rebellion. Their movement is vague and clouded, but they want political power.

The workers have some interests in common with the exploited farmers and the Communist Party must be given the credit for having exploited the discontent of the farmer to the full. The Farmer Labour Parties that have been formed show clearly the co-operation of the workers and exploited farmers.

In some sections the farmers have gone so far as to call themselves peasants instead of farmers.

The Ku Klux Klan is also trying to take advantage of the discontent of the farmers, and the farmers of the Middle West are a hotbed for the Ku Klux Klan. The Communists must be aware of this situation and lead the farmers in the right direction.

**Comrade Wolfe (Mexico):** In predominantly agrarian countries, the Communist Parties have especially difficult task to face. In Mexico, there is a petty bourgeois, semi-Socialist



government which is actually distributing land to the peasants. What are the Communists to do to combat the effect of this policy? The peasants are partially reconciled, and not open to our propaganda. This problem will face various European countries as peasant parties come into power.

The Indians, before the Spanish conquest, lived under a system of primitive Communism. The Spanish introduced the serf system, and during the three centuries following, the land became so concentrated that in 1910 over 95 per cent. of the rural population had no land at all. Whole states were owned two or three individuals.

The agrarian revolutionist, Zapata, and the peasants who followed him, revolted in 1910 because they wanted a redistribution of the land. He joined one revolutionary faction after another, being promised distribution of land by the promoters of each revolution. Each time he was disappointed. When the Russian Revolution occurred, he immediately saw the significance of it, and thereafter favoured the union of the peasants with the revolutionary workers.' He was assassinated in 1919 but the agrarian revolution continues.

The present government is distributing the land, but only as much as they absolutely need to, to keep the peasant from revolting.

In opposition the Communists have (1) opposed the granting of small parcels of land to individual peasants, because it is impossible for the peasants to do small scale farming under conditions in Mexico; (2) opposed the granting of land on a provisional basis depending on court decisions; (3) opposed the division of the untitled national land, but favoured turning the large estates of land which are already under cultivation into communal farms for large scale farming; (4) opposed the slogan of the government: "Every man has the right to a piece of land"—with the Communist slogan—"Every man has the right to as much land as he can work"; (5)

advocated the Workers' and Peasants' Government with excellent effect against petty bourgeois social-democratic government already in power; (6) opposed the legal methods of distributing land, favouring the peasants taking land and holding it by force of arms, and that peasants be allowed to have arms in their possession; (7) studying the special need of the peasantry in regard to irrigation, credits, etc. (8) forming Communist fractions successfully in the Agrarian Party, and causing a division in that party on the question of whether the peasant is to make an alliance with the yellow Labour Party or with the Communists.

Thus Mexico shows that the viewpoint of Comrade Bordiga, that it is no longer desirable for Communists to form fractions in other parties, is incorrect. The peasant of Mexico is readily able to understand the slogan: "Workers and Peasants' Government." He has responded to Communist propaganda both in the question of retention of arms, and the rejection of small parcels of land on the private property system.

**Comrade Popescu (Rumania):** In Rumania the peasants are neither small proprietors, free labourers, nor farmers, since they are not allowed to dispose of the land which they managed to obtain after, three successive uprisings. Economically and legally the peasant is in a position of semi-slavery.

The so-called Peasant Party is a party of the large peasants and the city and country intellectuals are striving to secure power in order to suppress the growing movement of the workers and peasants. In Rumania the Peasant Party is playing the same role as the fascists in other countries.

The peasantry are becoming steadily proletarianised; how far this proletarianisation has proceeded it is difficult say because in Rumania there are either no statistics at all, or what statistics there are, are false.

The Communist Party is endeavouring to study the position

of the peasantry. It has more than once proposed an united front with the Peasant Party. After the treachery of the right wing of the peasant party, it will now be possible to create a revolutionary peasant party in Rumania.

After Kolarov's report, Comrade Treint in the name of the French delegation made the following declaration protesting against the treachery of the Socialist Party of France in supporting the Herriot government and the continuation of the occupation of the Ruhr.

After this declaration, the chairman called upon Comrade Thaelmann to make a statement which was as follows:

"The declaration of the French delegation showed us that the analysis by our Congress of the further development of political events throughout the world is correct. Although the result of our discussion of the world situation is not yet formulated in the theses, it is already confirmed by events. The attitude of the French Socialists to the Ruhr credits shows at once the real nature of the "new" democratic-pacifist wave, as well as the role which the Second International will play in this phase of the history of mankind. We have before us in a new form, the old struggle of the international bourgeoisie for the salvation of the capitalist world order, the old treachery of the social democrats and the desperate, brutal and at the same time cunning action of the counter-revolutionaries. The counter-revolutionary plan of the Experts is now the rallying point for all counter revolutionary hopes and forces. To fight against it is not only the task of French Communists, but of all our Sections of the International as a whole. I think that I will express the feelings of the Congress if I say with Comrade Treint:

Down with the report of the Experts and with the occupation of the Ruhr!

Down with the International of social democratic treachery!

Down with the deceivers of bourgeois-democratic

pacifism!

Long live the world revolution!”

## **Twenty-Sixth Session, July 4th**

**Chairman: WYNKOOP**

**Reply to Discussion on Agrarian Question.  
By COMRADE KOLAROV.**

**Report on Young Communist International  
By COMRADE UNGER.**

### **Comrade Kolarov's Concluding Speech on the Agrarian Question.**

The Communist Parties should not be afraid to raise the question of the confiscation of capitalist property in the agrarian domain as well as in industry. In many of the countries this question is bound to play a predominant part, as for instance in Hungary, where large part of rural property is concentrated in the hand of large landowners.

In all countries the question of the fight against the war will become of ever greater political importance from the revolutionary standpoint. The greater the peril of a new war becomes imminent, the greater will become the influence of the anti-war propaganda, organised by the Communist Parties, and the greater will be its growing power to bring the peasant masses into our ranks.

Finally, the political situation, the white terror and the violence which rages in all countries, not only against the workers, but also against the peasants, will serve as a cause for common fighting by workers and peasants.

Here we have a series of concrete and practical questions which should be dealt with in our programme of action. We

were taught by experience that in many countries the Communist Parties have understood their tasks in a peculiar manner. We have seen journals, claiming to be peasant journals whose duty it is to carry on revolutionary activity in the village, which occupy themselves chiefly with technical questions of agriculture. In Germany, side by side with the records of the First Peasants' Conference at Moscow, they published articles dealing with the question of poultry feed. Well, this agronomic Instruction we should leave to the bourgeoisie. We have other tasks which are of closer interest to the peasantry and more likely to arouse them.

The Communist Parties must organise special commissions for propaganda and agitation among the peasants. We must organise conferences, particularly in agrarian regions. They must organise special local commissions, charged with the struggle and agitation in the village in general.

The countryside is poor in intellectual Communist forces. It is the duty of Communist Parties to supply them with these forces if they cannot be found on the spot, they should be returned elsewhere. It is necessary to organise sections which should go out on Sundays, and holidays, equipped with literature and all the other means of propaganda, to carry out a vigorous agitation in the rural districts on all the questions which are of interest to the peasant masses. This propaganda should not be general propaganda. On the contrary, attention should be concentrated on the social and concrete questions that are of a local character. In every village, in every agrarian district, there are special burning questions for the population. These should be studied and made the object of propaganda and agitation.

In dealing with these questions, we must avoid taking a doctrinaire and dogmatical standpoint. We must solve the questions in a practical manner, conformably to the interests and the comprehension of the village.

It is necessary to popularise the peasants' demands among the workers and to get them accepted by the working class, and *vice-versa*, to popularise among the peasants the demands of the working class, by demonstrating to the masses the possibility of uniting and defending by common effort, the common aims and interests of the workers and peasants. We must get accustomed to dealing simultaneously with the workers' and peasants' interests.

In many countries we have to do with peasant masses which are unorganised. In order to attract the peasant masses, it is necessary to demonstrate that the Communist Party is the only organisation acceptable to the peasantry. The Communist Parties must, of course, continue to rest on the basis of the working class; it goes without saying that we cannot risk shifting this basis of our parties by opening our doors wide to the unorganised peasant masses. Our aim is to attain the predominance of the Communist Party in the towns and in the villages. Consequently, we should do our utmost to organise peasant masses in economic groups; the agricultural labourers, in their unions, the small farmers in their farmers' organisations, and the small producers in the poor peasant organisations. I believe this to be the only reasonable and possible solution from the viewpoint of a Communist party.

But, comrades, the question is whether under certain conditions it would not be necessary also to create political parties of the peasants. I believe that to this question we should answer in the negative. This solution does not exclude the possibility, under certain conditions, of supporting, and even aiding, peasants' unions of a political character, for instance after a coup d'état. In Bulgaria, when the peasants' union as a political organisation was the target for fierce attacks by the counter-revolution, by the bourgeois and social patriots, the Bulgarian Communist Party found itself obliged to help this peasants' union to recover, and this attitude of the Bulgarian

Communist Party has helped the development of the influence, of the Communist Party over the peasant masses. One of the chief causes of the alliance between the workers and peasants, which has already been established among the masses and which no force on earth will be able either to check or destroy, lies in this very friendly attitude that was taken by the Bulgarian Communist Party towards the peasants' union in Bulgaria.

In conclusion, I wish to second the appeal made by Comrade Varga that we give greater attention to the agrarian question and that we devote greater effort towards the conquest of the village for the revolution, and for the alliance with the working class.

## **The Youth Movement.**

**Unger (Young Communist International:** In my report, I will deal with three points.

1. With the decisions made by the Fourth Congress of the Communist International and by the Third World Congress of the Young Communist International, which followed it, in connection with the work of the Young Communist International.

2. With the results and lessons achieved by the Young Communist International in the course of the work done on the strength of these decision.

3. With the future tasks of the Young Communist International.

The working class youth, which was among the most determined fighters against the imperialist war, which was most eager to enter the foremost ranks of the proletarian revolution, lost some of its fighting spirit as a result of the



decline of the revolutionary movement. The decline took place although the numerical strength of our movement had not decreased. This gave rise to a seeking of new ways and methods for the capture of the working class youth. In the course of these attempts to find new ways and methods, a number of erroneous tendencies came to light. There were tendencies to reduce the political activity of Communist youth organisations to a minimum, and to limit it to purely theoretical educational work. These tendencies have been overcome, and to-day we can safely say that the decisions of our Third Congress and with it also the decisions of the Fourth Congress of the C.I. have been carried out. Our movement not only has gained in numerical strength, but also has become more active and more efficient. The decisions of our last congress laid down the right premises and opportunities for the transformation of the Young Communist Leagues into mass organisations of the working class youth, provided they succeed, by direct participation in the actions of the working class, to make the working class youth energetic and class conscious fighters in the struggle of the working class for emancipation.

The main international activity in all working class actions was the fight of the Young Communist International against the occupation of the Ruhr. Even before the occupation took place, the Young Communist Leagues of Germany and France carried on a big political campaign in both these countries. The main object of this campaign was to establish between the German workers and French soldiers in the other occupied parts of Germany, an alliance which was to bring to nought the plans and designs of the French and German imperialists. To enliven this campaign, we organised an international propaganda week against war and militarism, which took place shortly before the well-known Frankfurt Conference. In this connection, the Young Communist International approached

also the other two Youth Internationals with a proposal to form an united front, which proposal met (as was anticipated) with a refusal.

The second important international political campaign was the united front campaign in connection with the fusion of the two Socialist Youth Internationals at the Hamburg Congress. This action too resulted in considerable success for us, because in connection with it, it was possible to carry on active agitation in Germany and Austria among the Socialist Youth.

In connection with the events in Germany we carried out several joint campaigns with the Comintern, and a big international mobilisation campaign among the Young Communist Leagues and the working class youth.

We also took an active part in the discussion which took place after the October defeat in Germany and Russia, and did our utmost to keep our members informed about the problems connected with this discussion.

In all these discussions, the Young Communist International always upheld, the line adopted by the Comintern.

It goes without saying that all Young Communist Leagues took part in all the actions which took place in their respective countries.

In Bulgaria, the youth recognised immediately the correctness of the position taken by the Comintern and mobilised at once all the forces to ensure the adoption of the Comintern lines by the Bulgarian Communist Party. In September, the Communist youth was the first to urge the Communist movement to take up and organise the struggle. After the September defeat, the Bulgarian youth did its utmost to apply the lessons which the Comintern and the Bulgarian Communist Party had learned from the events.

In France, our Young Communist League mobilised its best forces in the Frossard crisis with the object of helping to solve this crisis in the Comintern spirit.

In Norway, the Young Communist League forms together with the minority of a Norwegian workers' party a very important nucleus in the fight against centrist and social democratic tendencies which existed in the Norwegian workers' party.

Even in the East, the Young Communist Leagues form a centre of the political life. They work there on the lines laid down by the Communist International and the Young Communist International for the conduct of working class actions in those countries.

Another important part of our work is—work in the army and the fight against the war peril. The work done by our Leagues in connection with the Ruhr crisis was the first big campaign among the soldiers.

But we cannot say that on an international scale our Young Communist Leagues have been sufficiently active on this field. The only League of the few Leagues which carry on this kind of work successfully is our French League which (we can say it with justifiable pride) has done magnificent work on this field.

Now I should like to deal with one of our most important fields of action in the past: with the re-organisation of the Young Communist Leagues on a factory nuclei basis. The application of these directions aims at the consolidation of the proletarian nucleus of our movement. It is self-evident that in the factories we come into direct contact with the young factory workers and that our propaganda had to, therefore, take a different form. It had to be more concrete and more in touch with the everyday questions of the fight of the working class and of the working class youth.

We can say to-day that the greatest difficulties have been overcome, and that henceforth we can work on the field systematically and successfully. Apart from the Russian League, we have to record successful work by three of our

most important Leagues—the German, French, and Czech.

Our most important experiences in connection with this reorganisation are as follows:

There must be perfect clearness about the activity of our factory nuclei. It has become evident that the economic work of the factory nuclei, namely the mobilisation of the working class youth in the industries is looked upon as the main task. It must be borne in mind that factory nuclei have to do practically the same work which the former organisation on a residential basis had to do.

Comparatively little was done on the trade union field. The reason for this lies in the fact that we are now taking a more active part in the political action of the working class, and that there is a great deal of confusion in connection with the methods of our trade union work.

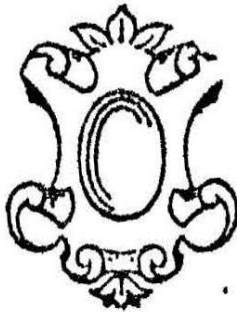
During the last twelve months many of our leagues increased their membership: in Russia the membership has gone up from 420,000 to 700,000, in German from 28,000 to 70,000. This was, of course, before the October fight. Owing to the prohibition of our League and to the disputes within it during the period of illegality, the membership dwindled to about 40,000. In France the membership went up from 4,000 to 7,000, in Italy from 2,000 to 4,500, in America from 2,000 to 5,000, in Czecho-Slovakia from 8,000 to 13,500 and finally (to mention one of our Leagues in the East) the membership of the Mongolian Young Communist League went from 2,500 to 3,000.

Just a few words on our relations with the Communist Parties.

We had not only political differences, as for instance in Sweden, Norway, Czecho-Slovakia. There were also a number of countries where the decisions of the Third World Congress on the organisational independence of the Young Communist League were entirely ignored. This happened in Poland. In

Bulgaria, the Young Communist League succeeded only during the last twelve months to establish its organisational independence. This happened after the June and September events had brought a thorough change into the movement.

Young Communist Leagues must be now more energetic than ever before in the work which our leader Lenin has begun.



## **Twenty-Seventh Session, July 5th**

**Chairman:** WYNKOOP.

### **TRADE UNION QUESTION.**

**Reporters:** COMRADES LOZOVSKY and HERZOG.

#### **Resume of Lozovsky's Report.**

The present situation within the trade union movement can be described as follows:

The general retreat of the working class has come to an end. In many countries the working class has already taken up the counter offensive.

We can safely say that reformism has reached its climax. It began with national defence and has landed in the defence of employers' profits.

In spite of its verbal protestations, the Amsterdam International has supported the occupation of the Ruhr. It sees salvation in the Report of the Experts.

At present the influence of the Communist International and of the Communist Parties is growing in all the trade unions, and our Parties and the revolutionary minorities are playing an increasingly important role in the economic actions of the proletariat.

We had examples of it in Germany and in Great Britain where a large number of "unofficial" strikes were initiated against the will of the leaders, and were conducted with the direct participation of the Communist Parties.

Throughout the activity of the Communist International the

idea of the fight for unity prevails. It is only natural that we should ask ourselves if this idea has not become obsolete. Unity is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Trade union unity offers the best field for Communist activity and creates favourable conditions for the capture of the masses. It is on the strength of this principle that the Communist International has declared itself most emphatically against the destruction of trade unions, and that it substitutes for this slogan the slogan of their capture, for the capture of the masses cannot be accomplished without the capture of the trade unions. Desertion of trade unions is not a sign of activity, but a symptom of despair. Our slogan must be: "Return to the trade unions." I know that in Germany this slogan met with a great deal of resistance and that many workers say: "Why should I pay membership fees to the trade union bureaucrats? But such questions cannot be settled from the viewpoint of membership fees, but only from the viewpoint of the aims of our general policy.

The fight for unity must not remain a mere formality but must find expression in effective campaigns, in systematic action in workshops and factories. It must consist in propaganda for unity and in urging the necessity of a unity congress where splits have already taken place. We must not allow the secessionist reformists to have the monopoly of unity.

We must also group and organise the expelled trade unionists or workers who have left the trade unions. We must not do this to preserve the small trade unions, but to continue with them the fight for unity. In this form, the slogan of the fight for unity does not at all conflict with the necessity of establishing, under certain circumstances, parallel organisations and of giving them support and encouragement. The main thing is—that these organisations fight for unity.

We must work energetically for the transformation of craft

trade unions into industrial unions. But wherever, the centralised trade unions are in the hands of reformist trade union bureaucrats, who kill all local initiative, it is absolutely necessary to fight against a centralism which kills initiative, and force more freedom for local organisations.

The Amsterdam International has been undergoing a crisis, and the crisis has become particularly acute under the growing influence of the Communist Parties and of the political action of the Red Trade Union International.

The crisis reached its climax after the occupation of the Ruhr, when some leaders of the Amsterdam International, especially Fimmen, began to demonstrate the impotence of the Amsterdam International without fully realising the reasons for it. The internal strife in the Amsterdam International became more acute, in connection with the slogan of the united front. The differences at the Vienna Congress had to do with two questions: the attitude towards the Russian trade unions, and the relations between the international federations according to industry and the Amsterdam International. At bottom the two questions amounted really to one, because the whole fight between the federations and the Amsterdam International, was over the relations between the former and the Russian unions.

The leaders of the left are not fully alive to the necessity of changing their politics from top to bottom: they fail to see that palliatives will serve no good purpose. We must not hesitate to criticise the inconsistency, the hesitancy, the undue cautiousness of the leaders of the English trade unions, but at the same time we must not forget that they are going towards the left.

The Communists must always be prepared to come to an understanding "with the workers who want to fight the bourgeoisie; they must never refuse united actions.

In same countries, as in France, there is a tendency to concentrate the entire attention on the revolutionary unions,



while ignoring entirely the parallel reformist unions. Wherever there are parallel organisations, the Communist Parties must be particularly active, with a view to the creation of nuclei in these reformist organisations. By neglecting to do this, we voluntarily circumscribe the scope of our action and retard the restoration of unity. It is equally irrational to urge the workers to quit the reformist unions in order to get them to join the revolutionary unions. The Communists should stay in the reformist unions in order to defend the Communist ideas from within.

Certain parties are not yet fully alive to the fact that the natural ground for the united front is the factory, the factory committee and the trade union. It is on this ground that we could show in practice, on everyday questions, the difference there is between us and the reformists. It is on this ground that we must be untiring in proposing the unity of action, the creation of mixed committees, etc. Only by considering the factory, the factory committee and the trade unions as the battleground of the united front, only by taking advantage of economic conflicts to urge the workers to back our demand for unity, can we achieve results in the shape of detaching the workers from the influence of the reformists. The Communist Parties must not only support the opposition movements, but also aid and encourage them, by organising and giving a clear lead to the discontent of the masses. While acting in this manner, our parties must endeavour to attract to the platform of the R.I.L.U. the greatest number of non-party or left social democratic workers.

By far the greatest drawback in our trade union activities is the absence of Communist nuclei in the factories. As long as we shall not create them, we shall not be in a position to take over the leadership of the trade union movement. It is a question of prime importance. Without the basic organs of the factory nuclei we cannot hope to draw the masses into the

fight.

The centre of our trade unionist activity must be transported into the masses, that is to say into the factories. Hence arises the need for the creation of factory committees, while combating all attempts at creating sham-committees in the factories.

In order to prepare for common actions in the different countries, in order to counteract the Chauvinist propaganda of the bourgeois press, we must proceed to form industrial committees between countries; for instance the Franco-German committee of miners, the Franco-Polish committee of railwaymen, etc. we must also create committees uniting the workers of all the industries: the Anglo-Russian committee, the Russo-Polish, etc. The Frankfurt conference of March, 1923, has already foreseen this type of committee. Unfortunately, the Communist parties have done no thing in this sense.

The influence over the trade union movement in the colonies is a question which should not be neglected.

There is hardly any propagandist literature for the colonies to speak of if our parties persist in their passive attitude, there will be nothing to distinguish them from the Social-Democrats.

We are too little familiar with the ways of our enemies. We know their politics, but we do not know their organisations. And yet the fighting organisations of the bosses are of particular interest to us. The bosses have their agents paid or voluntary in our own midst. They maintain a whole series of institutions, of which we know neither the structure nor the activity. It is only at a time of conflict that we learn about these activities. To know the enemy is an essential to success.

These are the tasks which confront the Communist International and its parties. The question naturally arises: has the C.I. to change its policy or not? To this we can reply with a decided "No." The Fifth Congress, should approve all the decisions of the preceding congresses. We must frankly declare

that the line which was followed was right, that the work, accomplished, in spite of all its imperfections, has brought big results, that if we have grown in many countries; if we have become mass organisations, it was thanks to our trade union tactics. These tactics we should not change, but rather make them more perfect, more effective and more supple. All this cannot be done unless the Communist Parties understand the enormous importance of the trade unions to the struggle of the working class. The trade unions occupy a fixed place in the class struggle, they are destined to play a still greater part on the morrow after the revolution. It is for this reason that we do not withdraw one iota from the decisions which we have taken, and we shall continue so until the final capture of the trade unions, that is to say, the capture of the masses.

Comrade Herzog: Comrade Losovsky says that the characteristic feature of the present year is the fact that the general retreat of the working class has been stayed.

In several countries it is true we find a halt, which perhaps may be only apparent. We also find that economic struggles are going on in many countries. But on the whole, the capitalist offensive against the working class is continuing. The acceptance of the Experts' Plan means that the attack of the employers upon the working class is successfully continuing. The nine-hour day will be extended to a ten and even an eleven hour day; wages will be depressed still further. This cannot but react upon the conditions of labour in other countries.

Comrade Losovsky further says that one of the characteristic features of the present time is that the influence of the R.I.L.U. has considerably increased in all countries. I sincerely hope this is true, although I am unable to assert it definitely. I have the feeling that we have suffered a distinct check in this respect owing to the wave of pacifism.

Losovsky said that in Germany the necessity for capturing the trade unions was not properly understood; considerable

fluctuations have taken place in the German revolutionary movement. We know that very well, but we cannot explain the fluctuations in our country quite so simply. We must examine into the causes and they are manifold.

We confess that we went to the Frankfurt party congress with a certain feeling of the hopelessness regarding the trade union question, for when at about this time we took a vote, the majority of our members declared that the right slogan was: leave the trade unions. But the decision of the Frankfurt Party Congress helped us considerably out of the crisis and if we carry out this resolution, the situation will become much easier in our country. What organisations have we in Germany and what are the ideas they represent?

First, the Union of Hand and Brain Workers. We conducted a determined struggle in this organisation against its theoreticians. Today, after five years of bitter experience, we have succeeded in getting order in this organisation.

There is an important organisation in Germany called the Expelled Building Workers Union. Let me say a few words about this organisation. It gave rise to great illusions among many revolutionary workers, who thought that an organisation like the Chemnitz Building Workers' Union was a type of organisation which by strategy could lead the workers better than the large trade unions. Practically all such independent organisations are the product of the fight against the Amsterdamers and their expulsion tactics. The existence of such organisations, however, is producing a new ideology—organisation egoism. These organisations believe that they form the nuclei for new dual trade unions.

The problem of the unorganised is a very important one. Their number has grown considerably in Germany during the last few years. Our comrades conclude; therefore, that we must organise these workers in new dual organisations. But we now already know that the dual organisations lead to no good.

The fight for the eight-hour day forms a central point of the whole revolutionary trade union movement. We must regain the position we lost. For this we need the help of the International, a dear and uniform tactic and firm and resolute point of view. In December of last year, after the great defeat of the proletariat, the employers lengthened the hours of the Ruhr workers. Without asking the workers the trade union leaders simply abolished the seven-hour day in the mines. We have now organised the opposition in Germany. We have found a platform for its work, and with this organised opposition which is inside and outside the trade unions and in the factory councils we can manoeuvre and operate and institute movements.

The industrial proletariat of the Rhine in January, February and March in a fight that lasted several weeks and which embraced 700,000 workers, proved that the workers were both willing to fight and able to fight.

We have the same experience with regard to the heroic fight in Ludwigshafen and the fight of the Rhine-Westphalian miners.

We tried to extend the movement in Germany to the most important trades, the railwaymen and the engineers. In this, however, we did not succeed. The workers failed to understand the meaning of the movement. We wanted to summon an international conference of miners with the help of the R.I.L.U. This broke down, however, owing to passivity of the Czech and French comrades.

In this fight we saw that the unorganised are no longer the same as the unorganised of former times, they fought as heroically as the organised workers.

What experiences have we had in Germany? We saw that the workers even in the present situation are prepared for a direct attack from the employers. Moreover, we saw that the women play a different role from what they did formerly.

Formerly, during a strike, the women attacked the men in the rear. But now the women in Germany march before the man, they tell them that they must not work for a dog's pay. The women have stood on picket duty. In Ludwigshafen where a state of siege prevailed, they won back the streets for us. The women have conducted armed fights against the strike-breakers. We must, therefore, mobilise the women. Another important experience was the setting up of educational groups during the strikes, which went from house to house to explain to the men and women what the fight was about, how it was being fought, and how the strike-breakers were being opposed.

I want to refer to another matter, namely, the International Workers' Relief and the Co-operatives. Closer contact than hitherto must be set up with these organisations. In this respect there is much to be desired.

A word regarding the Vienna Congress. It is said that there an Amsterdam Left-wing crystallised out; it appeared as if a certain vacillation was going on in this organisation. But I must emphatically warn you against possible illusions. We had such a Left movement in the German trade unions in Dissmann, Auffhauser, etc., and it was a stronger movement than the British. We have seen however that this "Left" is more dangerous to the development of the revolutionary ideology than the Right trade union leaders. We must not make this great mistake again, or else we shall get into a very dangerous situation. We beg the congress not to put our movement into such a position. If this does not happen, we hope to create a revolutionary tactic in Germany which for firmness, clarity and energy will be an example in the fight against the revolutionary elements organised in the R.I.L.U. and the C.I. (Applause.)

## Twenty-Eighth Session, July 5th (Evening)

**Chairman: WYNKOOP.**

### DISCUSSION ON TRADE UNION QUESTION.

**Schulze (Germany):** The resolution on the immediate tasks of the Party adopted unanimously in Frankfurt contains the following:

“Those who desert the trade unions, help the reformists. We must strengthen the work in the trade unions to capture the organised workers, and to make them politically class conscious and to bring them under the leadership of the German Communist Party. Those who, contrary to discipline desert the trade unions, do untold harm to the Party and to the revolution.”

It still remains to be proved that the independent unions have offended against this paragraph of the resolution. I have before me the resolution on the trade union question, and should like to remind you of a passage in it:

“Therefore the Party must at the same time begin to carry on in connection with its trade union work, energetic and useful activities in the factories with the object of organising the unorganised and those who have left the union. This must be carried on on a national scale.”

This paragraph shows that the Frankfurt Party Congress made decisions which are binding, at least up to the Comintern Congress, not only as far as fundamental questions, but also as far as the question of those who were either expelled from the unions or left them on their own accord, are concerned.

I maintain that the victory of our left over Brandler at the

Frankfurt Party Congress was not only due to the exposure of the sins committed by the latter in October, but also by concessions made in connection with the trade union question.

This is shown by the resolution which was adopted unanimously prior to the Frankfurt Party Congress at a meeting of union delegates and members of the enlarged fractions' committee of the Berlin metal workers. This resolution says, among other things, that it is essential for the Party to capture the unorganised in the factories with the help of the revolutionary factory councils.

It has been asserted that the independent unions' attitude is: leave the trade unions and form immediately industrial unions on a national scale.

I declare that all the unions adhering to the independent Berlin cartel, have repeatedly stated that nothing is further from their minds than withdrawing their members from the old unions. But on the strength of the Frankfurt resolution, they consider themselves not only justified but even under the obligation to take into the cartel the unorganised, as well as those who were expelled, or left the unions on their own accord, for the purpose of making this cartel an industrial organisation.

I should like to dispel another notion. A decision was made at the Frankfurt Party Congress which is erroneous, namely, that it is possible to carry on mass struggles in time of actions without a solid organisation and only with the help of factory councils. In countries with a well-trained and organised working class, political fights can only be won if one has developed organisational forms wherever they exist and bring new forms into existence where there are none.

Neither are factory nuclei organisations capable of conducting long strikes of an economic and political nature. The organisation will always have to be used for this purpose.

Our task and our demands are: to do our utmost to see that



the masses are brought into motion and into our fight. And if we use for this purpose the means and methods created by the Frankfurt Party Congress, which will probably be endorsed and supported by the Congress of the Communist International, we shall be following the lines which were proposed not only by the German Communist Party, but also by the Comintern.

I will now sum up the position of the independent unions in Germany: we do not advocate leaving the trade unions. No one can prove that we do, but we say distinctly, the unorganised must not be amalgamated through factory councils: the expelled and those who have left the unions must not be amalgamated through all kinds of loose formations. They must be formed into unions in order to be developed into industrial organisations. (Interruption: and the Party comrades?)

Party comrades must not run about unorganised. They must either organise themselves in the independent unions, wherever such unions exist, or must remain in the old unions.

The negotiations between the Russian and the British trade unions have a bearing on all trade union actions throughout the world. if these negotiations were to end in a successful re-union of all workers in uniform trade unions with a uniform leadership of the proletarian fight and with the preservation of Communist control, the action of the Russian comrades will have had good results. But if, as we are afraid, the opposite were to happen, it would mean an enormous set-back for the trade union movement throughout the world.

## **Twenty-Ninth Session, July 7th**

**Chairman: GEBHARDT.**

**Speakers: SEELIG, KOHN, SCINARD, KUCHER,  
BORDIGA, PIERIZE, KATAYAMA, RUTH  
FISCHER, SCHULZE.**

**Speech in reply: SERZOG.**

### **DISCUSSION ON TRADE UNION QUESTION.**

**Comrade Seelig (Germany):** Our fight cannot be successful unless we capture the trade unions, and therefore, we must do our utmost to remain in the trade unions. It is self-evident that the expulsionist tactics of the reformist bureaucrats will grow more acute as Communists increase their activity and influence. It would be a great mistake to make a virtue out of necessity, as Schulze is inclined to do. On our part, it would be the greatest mistake possible to form parallel organisations. Even the last unity congress of Hand and Brain Workers recognised this. We can see that even at that congress workers showed that they have profited by the mistakes of the past. There are big and serious fights ahead of us in Germany. Therefore, it is incomprehensible to us that there can be comrades who expect to find in the British trade union movement a left wing, with which it would be possible to follow another line of action. I believe, that this would weaken and do harm to our work in Germany. We are, therefore, very glad that our Russian comrades have not encouraged this idea. They will thereby make our work in the trade unions and also our opposition to Comrade Schulze easier.

**Kohn (Czecho-Slovakia):** In our country, where we had to resist a very strong capitalist offensive during the last twelve months, the workers seem inclined to extend the offensive against the capitalists. We would be bad strategists if we did not attempt to co-ordinate in good time these sporadic attempts and if we did not prepare a general workers' offensive.

In Czecho-Slovakia we have our own trade unions, which came into being through the split tactics of the reformists. The International Trade Union Federation is the organisational basis of these trade unions. But our Party insists that our comrades, who are still in the reformist unions, should remain there, with the object of carrying on and to bring into the revolutionary unions not individuals but groups and within them energetic fractional work. We ask the Comintern to give us definite directions for our future activity, and we must know what is the attitude of the Comintern to the decisions of our Brünn National Conference on the question of trade union tactics. Another very important question, is that of International co-ordination of action. During the miners' strike in the Ruhr district, we waited impatiently for unification with our German comrades. We met on Saxon territory, but the representatives of most of the strike centres, and of the central committee of the German Party did not come. It is absolutely necessary to have permanent international committees of action for the most important branches of industry.

**Comrade Semard (France):** I am surprised at the attitude taken by the German comrades on the question of international unity. We think the tactics of unity are the means of winning over the reformist masses which still follow their leaders, and that by penetrating to these masses, we shall be able to expose the treachery of their leaders. We could not do so by isolating ourselves as Comrade Bordiga does.

We do not follow our German comrades when they declare

their repugnance at meeting the reformist leaders. The same language is used by Jouhaux and Bidegarray when they say that they do not wish to meet Semard and Monmousseau. This, of course, is out of the question, for our aim is to bring about the unity of the proletariat.

At the Vienna Congress the chief question was that of the relations with the national federations of industry. In view of the leftist position taken by certain of these federations within the Amsterdam International it is our duty to support these industrial federations which are tactically with us for the achievement of unity in the trade unions.

We fail to see the reason for the assertion that the international workers' movement is not ripe for the tactics of unity.

I say that in all countries the question may be put to the proletariat—not to social democratic leaders, but to the workers—whether they are for or against the tactics of unity. I am convinced that all the workers, without the distinction of tendencies are in favour of unity in the trade unions, and we would commit a grave mistake by failing to take advantage of this tendency.

**Comrade Kucher (America):** I doubt whether what Comrade Losovsky said about the slackening of the offensive of capital is applicable to the United States, for we find that in the basic industries the drive has intensified and we expect the employers to take full advantage of the coming crisis to increase hours and decrease wages.

We have a different situation to meet in America than have our European comrades who must combat the social democratic reformist trade unions. The A.F. of L. is not affiliated with Amsterdam, and although it is more reactionary than the European organisations, our problem is probably more simple.

I am opposed to the proposals of the Russian trade unions to attempt affiliation with Amsterdam, but on the other hand I cannot support the position taken by Comrade Schumacher. I maintain that if there is to be any break in the unions, we must leave it to the reformists to bring about the break. We must maintain unity as long as possible: but we must be careful not to make a fetish of unity and carry it to an extreme.

If properly approached, the workers will welcome organisation after the last two years of economic oppression. It is, impossible to bring the masses into the A.F. of L. because of the latter's own policy of refusing to organise the unskilled workers.

We intend submitting several proposals to Profintern, including the following: That the tendency to form independent unions in America be left to develop; to make an effort to bring the large number of independent unions in America into some sort of organisation which will serve as a centre of common action; that the Committee of Action be definitely known as the representative of the R.I.L.U., and serve to correlate the efforts being made within the craft unions and the industrial unions.

The policy of the Profintern toward the I.W.W. in the past has been wrong. The I.W.W. have splendid revolutionary elements among them who are open to Communist propaganda. They are not a purely anarcho-syndicalist group, and, if properly approached, could be won over.

There is great unrest among the workers at present because of the economic pressure of the last two or three years, and this must be taken advantage of by the Communists to organise the workers into Communist controlled unions, otherwise some other group hostile to Communism will take the initiative.

We have two alternatives: (1) to form independent unions, and (2) to strengthen the industrial unions.

The danger of dualism is not great in America. The first

task is to organise the workers, and the danger of splits will be met as it arises.

**Bordiga:** Semard tells us that we in Italy support the united front merely on the basis of the trade unions, and that we must, therefore, divide our party into two groups, one group which will have to support united front tactics, because it is in the trade unions, and another group which will not be able to do this because it is not in the trade unions. Well, all I have to say is that these two categories do not exist in the Italian Party, just as they should not exist in any Marxist Party. We are all of us concerned with the trade unions and the problems with which these organisations are confronted.

If the question of fusion between the Amsterdam and Red Trade Union Internationals is raised; we will oppose it. The conditions advanced for the realisation of this union are such that they must inevitably be rejected by the Amsterdam International. You say: All the better! We shall bring forward the proposal; Amsterdam will refuse, and this will be one more proof for the workers that we are for unity. I am afraid that the workers will think that we tried to dissolve our International and that this has not taken place only because Amsterdam refused our proposals. This will make our work very difficult.

There is also something more. There is much talk about the Amsterdam Left-wing, and an attempt is being made to impress us with the importance of the position taken up by it. We are asked to throw ourselves into the arms of this left-wing about which we are to indulge in the same old illusions. I think that such a proposal shows us the danger of the application of “right” tactics which we must strenuously oppose.

**Rienzi:** The Red Trade Union International was established in 1920 because it was generally felt that there must be a revolutionary central organisation for the proletariat.

Is it possible to speak of liquidation? Certainly not. Every

Communist thinks that unity tactics are the continuation of the struggle inaugurated by the establishment of the Red International of Labour Unions.

For some time, we had a situation which could be called favourable, because we had all the advantages of the defence of unity.

As far as Italy is concerned, we say that the unity campaign will be favourable to the campaign which we must initiate for the return of the masses to the trade unions. This campaign for unity will preserve us from the dilemma before which we are continually placed by the reformists on the national field.

**Comrade Katayama:** Until the great earthquake in September, the Japanese labour unions were on the defensive against the general capitalist offensive. Almost all strikes were defeated and the number of members in the trade unions greatly decreased.

But after the earthquake the capitalists tried to put the entire burden of the catastrophe on the shoulders of the workers. The latter finally rebelled and now we find that the strikes are offensive strikes and that the membership of the trade unions is steadily increasing.

We have an united front of labour unions in Japan. The Korean labour unions are affiliated with the Japanese, and pleasant relations exist between the two.

Until very recently, the Amsterdam International and the Second International had very little influence in the Far East. But now these two organisations are carrying on an intensive propaganda among the Oriental workers and are having same effect. Hitherto the Communists had great influence among the trade unions, as there were no social democratic elements to befog the issue it must be emphasised that although the Amsterdam and Second Internationals may have very little influence in the West, they are becoming increasingly

important in the East and must be fought by the Communists.

**Comrade Dunne (America):** Comrade Losovsky's statement that the capitalist offensive is being checked, holds true for America, for there has been an increase in employment and of wages in the last two years. With regard to fighting the Amsterdam International, it is difficult for the American comrades to do this because the A.F. of L. is even more Right than the Amsterdam International. If any understanding is reached with Amsterdam, we hope it will clarify the issue and make the fight a more clear cut one in America.

With regard to the most important point raised by Comrade Losovsky—that of staying in or leaving the trade unions—I want to state that Schulze is a type, and that we have some Schulzes in America, a small group of which Kucher is the leader. In America there is an old tradition of leaving the trade unions and disrupting them. We had almost succeeded in eradicating this tendency after the Communist International adopted the definite policy of working within the trade unions, until the question arose again in Germany, and called forth an echo in America. I hope this Congress, in taking up this question again, will take a clear-cut, unambiguous stand which will definitely put a stop to the Schulze tendency in all countries.

Kucher tried to give the impression that the American trade unions are thoroughly reactionary and dominated by the bureaucrats. To him such matters as the coal miners' strike, involving 500,000 militant men, and the railroad workers' strike, involving 400,000 men who defied the government, mean nothing. The Kucher group also maintains that the organised workers will not organise the unorganised, and that the latter are clamouring for organisation. I differ. In America the most intelligent and most militant elements in the labour unions are within the trade unions, and are there because they



see that collective action is better than no organisation at all. Communist work in the trade unions is having its effect. The Communists have succeeded in influencing several of the recent trade union conventions. The Communist Party is dominating minority oppositions in the trade unions in the face of the trade union bureaucrats and the capitalist government. There is no social democratic group to act as a buffer between the capitalist state and the Communist Party.

The place of Schulze is in the unions, where they can get results. Outside the trade unions they are impotent for they are divorced from masses.

Until this question is definitely settled for America, the American Party will never be a mass party, and until it is thoroughly threshed out in the whole international, we will never be on the high road to world revolution.

**Ruth Fischer (Germany):** I have been asked to declare that Comrade Schulze did not speak in the name of the party, but in his own name, and that the Central Committee of the German Communist Party insisted that he should come and state his point of view before the Congress, so that the German workers shall be able to decide either for the standpoint of the Congress or for the standpoint of Comrade Schulze.

It must be understood that we are not dealing with the feelings of certain undisciplined Communists, but with a cause originating in the disruptionist tactics of the Amsterdammers and the Social-Democrats.

Schulze has made a pitiful and cowardly retreat. Whoever heard him speak in Germany knows that he openly advocated the formation of new industrial unions; that he actually made the senseless proposal that the district committees should form the industrial unions.

No one cherishes the illusion that the unity of the international trade union movement is possible, however much

we may desire it in the interests of the labour movement. The German masses do not believe that it is possible to compel the Amsterdamers to unite the trade union movement on a revolutionary basis. What we can do is to attempt to show that the Left opposition is not serious, that it is only playing a game and only pretending to invite the Russian trade unions. If we are to prepare for such a manoeuvre, we must very carefully test the feeling of the masses. It was, therefore, that the German Party absolutely and energetically opposed the taking of such a decisive step before the masses have got to understand what change had taken place in the trade union movement and before the "Left" had stated their point of view quite clearly.

**Schulze (Germany):** I want to draw your attention to the fact that in all countries, after the affiliation and the active participation of our Communist sections, new organisations were either formed directly, or indirectly stimulated to organise. It is no easy task to explain to a German worker for five years that the trade union leaders are rascals and to say at the same time that he must remain in the trade union.

A conflict has arisen on the question of whether the policy adopted by the Russian section in its proposed dealings with the Amsterdamers is right or wrong. I declare that whoever thinks of liquidating the R.I.L.U. ultimately liquidates the Communist International.

Comrade Gebhardt on behalf of the German delegation made the following declaration:

"The German delegation unanimously rejects the views represented by Comrade Schumacher (Schulze) at the Congress. These views contradict the decisions of the Comintern as well as the decision of the Frankfurt Conference of the Party.

The German delegation declares its determination to carry on the fight against all deviations in the trade union question, with the utmost vigour and with all the consequences

involved.”

Comrade Herzog thereupon delivered his concluding speech.

**Comrade Herzog:** I was asked by the representatives of the independent unions to the Profintern Congress, who are present in this hall to declare that the representatives of the Chemnitz Union of the Building Trades, of the Seamen’s Union, and of the Building Workers’ Manual and Brain Workers’ organisation, do not under any circumstance identify themselves with the views held by Schulze. In the second place, it should be stated that Schulze was never commissioned to speak on behalf of the members of the independent unions. The independent unions of Berlin have formed an amalgamation, led by Comrade Ex, who declared at the last meeting of the National Labour Committee that his organisation did not agree with Schumacher’s views. The sickly tendency represented by Schumacher in our trade union movement is confined to Berlin, and even there it is on the decrease. Comrade Schulze made much here of a decision by a general meeting at Berlin, without mentioning that this decision was adopted before the Frankfurt Conference of the Party.

Our German comrades were utterly amazed at the statements made by Comrade Semard, that the Communists made no serious efforts to prevent the split at the trade union conference in Paris, where the unfortunate split occurred. We always maintained the view that this split was a mistake, and so we declared at different congresses. But did the French comrades at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern? They merely asked for a dissolution of the close relations between the Profintern and the Comintern. At the same Congress, there was a vigorous fight, because the French and the Russian comrades wanted the International Propaganda Committees to

be converted into independent organisations. We fought against these tendencies, because we gained bitter lessons upon the trade union question. We have learned something from Heidelberg and we were immensely glad that our standpoint was backed by the Comintern.

Comrade Zinoviev told us about the necessity of a Leninist lesson on the trade union question. But I will read a passage from such a lesson ("Resolution on the German Trade Union Question," January, 1924), and I would ask the Congress to decide if that was the proper attitude, and if it tallied with the present standpoint of Zinoviev. The resolution deals with the relations in Germany and makes some quite proper observations but it goes on talking about organising the expelled and "others" (by "others" are presumably meant those who quit of their own accord or who are unorganised), and it says as follows:

"In this connection it is necessary to choose and apply diverse methods (factory councils, control committees, parallel unions of the expelled, general labour committees, unemployed committees etc) without tying our hands in any way by any or the methods and formulae of the opposition."

It would have been useful at the time to tell the German workers to quit this, and to bring these elements back into the unions. Then you would have had no Schulze.

Substantially we are in agreement with Comrade Zinoviev on the trade union question, but we thought it necessary to emphasise here that exaggerations have frequently the opposite effect than the one anticipated.

We shall yet have the opportunity to deal with this problem at the Enlarged Executive of the Comintern and at the Congress of the R.I.L.U. I also think that the workers will understand the task if it is stated by the Comintern clearly and unmistakably, and if a vigorous stand is taken against all deviations.

## Thirtieth Session, July 7th

**Chairman; GEBHARDT.**

### TRADE UNION QUESTION.

#### **Closing Speeches by Comrades Lozovsky and Zinoviev.**

Losovsky: When we say that the general retreat has come to a standstill and that there are partial struggles in the various countries and in various industries, defensive as well as offensive struggles, we simply mean that in 1924 the situation differs from the situation in 1922 or 1923. In 1924 we witnessed big economic conflicts in Great Britain in France, Czecho-Slovakia, etc. This shows that the retreat is not general, that the capitalist offensive has been stayed and that the new situation has arisen. I do not say that there is a general offensive, far from it. There are partial offensives, defensive strikes and a certain recrudescence of activity.

The question which gave rise to very lively discussion is the question of unity. is it or is it not necessary to alter the Communist International's slogan "Capture of Trade Unions?"

Schultze, who is a very clever speaker, made a speech which is not in keeping with his actions. He does much more than he says. He is preparing the split and then he comes and tells us that we should organise only those who leave the unions. He forgot to tell us that it is due to him and his friends' propaganda during many months that the workers have become alarmed and disgusted with the old trade unions because he and his followers dangled before the eyes of the workers the perspective of new trade unions—industrial trade unions,

fighting trade unions, etc.

To begin with, Schultze tries to find the real culprit.

It appears that I proposed to convene a Congress at which I would cut the trade union movement in 54 pieces with a big knife. This legend is pure fiction.

We know very well what took place at the Frankfurt Congress. I was delegated to it by the Communist International and Herzog was also present. He must be aware that Zinoviev's letter against secession created great confusion at the Congress and that the comrades of the Left refused to publish it for several weeks. We had to fight against those who called themselves the extreme Left, and when I added to the proposed resolution a paragraph saying that all traitors must be expelled from the trade union movement, I was told: No, this must not be for if we say that the traitor's must be expelled, this means that we must remain inside.

Thus the fathers of the error are our comrades of the German Party, and not the Communist International nor the Red Trade Union International.

The present situation cannot last: twenty thousand Communist Berlin workers left their trade unions, and there are unions such as the metal workers' union in which we had a majority at the last elections, and in which we are reduced now to 25 per cent. Wherever Communists desert the trade unions, social Democrats arrive in full force.

It is not enough to say: We are against secession, Communists who left the trade unions must go back to them.

There are comrades who say here: Quite ten thousand of good Communists will leave the unions.

Good Communists will not leave the unions.

With your permission I will now deal with the question which was discussed here, but with which I did not deal—international unity.

What is the situation?

Is the Amsterdam International the same as it was twelve months, ago? Same comrades say: Yes, even in Great Britain there are bureaucratic trade unionists who sign anti-Communist resolutions.

This is certainly so, but it would be a mistake to judge the trade union movement by its leaders. Communist tactics consist in recognising any change within the masses in spite of the caricature of such change presented to us by either left or right leaders. Well, if we take the trouble to examine from this viewpoint what is going on in the Amsterdam. Trade Union movement, and in great Britain, we shall have to say with downright Communist Leninism: a change has taken place because we are in 1924 confronted with the phenomenon that the General Secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain has been elected on the strength of the programme of the Red International of Labour Unions, by 227,000 votes, while those who were against it received only 200,000 votes. There was also the conference of the South Wales miners, which has 200,000 members, and which a fortnight ago carried a resolution for adhesion to the Red International of Labour Unions.

I am always asking myself how will the proposals with which we intend to approach the Amsterdammers influence the workers, will they help us to mobilise the masses and to attract them to our side?

We always speak of the masses, while our opponents merely speak of the unpleasantness of having anything to do with Jouhaux.

We are for unity because it enables us to extend our Communist field of action.

Our proposals have greatly alarmed the Social-Democratic press.

We have before us a resolution of the Amsterdam International. The Congress instructs its bureau to enter into

negotiations with the Russian trade unions with the object of coming to an agreement on the basis, of the programme and the statutes of the Amsterdam International.

To a political proposal, one must give a political answer. To a proposal made quite openly through the world press, the International working class movement must give a general political answer for the whole international working class movement.

There are three possible answers. The first answer would be—to send all these people to the devil. This is easily done and does not require much brain work. But if we were to give such an answer, we would play into the hands of our adversaries.

There is the proposal that the Russian trade unions enter the Amsterdam International, that they recognise its programme, that the Red Trade Union International be dissolved and unity re-established. I believe that we are all against this solution, because the Russian trade unions are an integral part of the international revolutionary trade union movement. They cannot have tactics of their own, differing from those of the Communist International and the Red Trade Union International.

Ruth Fischer says But your proposal comes very suddenly. We must prepare the masses. Do not take the vote: We are going to prepare the masses first.

But I should like to know how you. will be able to prepare the masses if you have not a decision of this Congress to go upon?

If at this Congress or in the Executive we do not pass a clear resolution, if the Profintern Congress does not respond with an unambiguous resolution, the confusion in the minds of same delegates will be a thousand times greater than before. That is why I reject the proposal of postponement. I am for preparation. I am in favour of organising meetings and general



meetings in factories and workshops. But for this purpose, let us first record our vote on what we want to do. Otherwise preparation will be made in Germany in one fashion and in Belgium in another fashion. In Spain it will be done a l'Espagnole and in America a l'Americain, (Applause.) In conclusion:

This is the crux of Leninism. Lenin always knew when it was time for a change of tactics and methods. If you take the twenty years of our Party's existence, and the seven years of revolution, you will realise through what dangerous phases we have passed scatheless because of the elasticity of Bolshevism.

Do not let us be sectarian, and let us be fearless. You say that you cannot sit down at the same table with Jouhaux. But we do not sit down at the same table with him "for the sake of his beautiful eyes," but because there are unions of workers who follow him and tens of millions who are neither with us nor him.

That is why we must find an opportune moment for issuing a new slogan, for placing before the working class the problem of world unity and for not allowing the reformists to have the monopoly of the fight for unity, for we know that it is they who break up the trade union movement and endeavour to break up the revolution. (Loud applause.)

**Zinoviev:** Comrades, the trade union question is extremely important. To allow any misunderstanding to exist on this question would greatly injure the whole movement.

Much has been said at this Congress regarding the necessity of bolshevising the Party and about loyalty to Leninism. We should have preferred less talk about the bolshevisation of the party, and a deeper understanding of the real essence of Leninism, especially in the trade union question. (Applause.)

### **Bolshevism against Splits in the Trade Unions.**

The attitude of Leninism to the trade union question is clear to us, firstly from actual practice. You know, of course, that the first political split between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks took place in 1903, that is, more than 20 years ago (I will not speak of the situation that existed before that time). The Bolsheviks acted quite differently, however, in trade union questions. Notwithstanding all the splits which have occurred in the sphere of political organisations, we have not caused a split in a single trade union—(**Radek:** True)—either before, during or since the revolution. This fact is worth considering, comrades. Even after the October revolution the trade unions were to a very large extent in the hands of the Mensheviks, and notwithstanding the fact we did everything to avoid a split. Later, when the Mensheviks had already become a very significant section in the trade unions, our party did everything. in its power to conquer the trade unions from within, without splitting them.

Thus, comrades, if you wish to understand the practice of Bolshevism you must not forget this FUNDAMENTAL fact; the Mensheviks called us “professional splitters” because of the splits that took place in the political field during the course of 25 years, but there was NOT A SINGLE SPLIT in the sphere of trade union work—neither, when we were in the minority in the trade unions, nor, when we had the majority behind us. This is one of the basic facts in the history of the Russian revolution and of Russian Bolshevism.

Anyone who calls himself a Leninist, who advocates the bolshevisation of the party (it seems that even Schumacher approves this—but deliver us from this kind of bolshevisation), cannot advocate the splitting of the trade unions, a policy which in reality means concurrence with Menshevism, although Schumacher considers himself a Leftist. We have

already had enough of that type of leftism. If I am not mistaken, Schumacher was here in Moscow three years ago as the representative of the Independent Social-Democratic Party, and now he acts as if the International were not Left enough for him. (**Radek:** That of ten happens!) if you are talking seriously of the bolshevisation of the party, mark this, once and for all, the struggle for the unity of the trade union movement is one of the distinguishing features of Bolshevism, and has been the practice of Russian Bolshevism for 25 years. We have not caused a split in a single trade union. Why? Because we loved the Mensheviks, or because we regarded the unions as a sacred and inviolable form of the Labour movement? No, not because of that, but solely because we considered the unions the centre around which the entire working class is grouped.

Not long ago certain comrades in the German party were saying: "We've had enough of the trade unions, we should like to create a 'new form' of Labour movement." And these comrades actually believed that by their own freewill it would be easy enough to find such a "new form." Call this anything you like—but not Bolshevism. The unions were not invented by Grossman, D'Arragona and Legien, they are the historically inevitable form of the mass organisation of the proletariat under capitalism. You cannot conjure a "new form" of the Labour movement out of thin air. We know only one "new form" of mass Labour organisation (outside of the trade unions) and that is the Soviets. But this form cannot be created at will. At the Second Congress we adopted a special resolution regarding the conditions of creating the Soviets. Read that again. There you will find definite instructions as to WHEN the Soviets may be formed—namely, on the eve of revolution, that is, when they already represent the embryo of the Labour Government—the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Thus in the Soviets we actually have a new form of the Labour movement; but they cannot be formed any time you

like—they are possible only on the eve of revolution. There is no other form for the proletarian mass movement.

The factory and workshop committees are gradually becoming a new form of the Labour movement within trade unionism. But the trade unions, mark you, remain the most important organisations even after victory of the proletariat, after the seizure of power by the workers. In any case this has been demonstrated by the history of the only victorious revolution—the Russian revolution.

It would, therefore, be the height of absurdity to talk as if we could arbitrarily create a “new form” of the Labour movement, and discard the old and as yet the only form. Comrade Lenin taught us that THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN SPITE OF THE TREACHERY OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS, IS THE HISTORICALLY INEVITABLE FORM TO UNITE THE ENTIRE PROLETARIAT INTO ONE ORGANISATION. Hence, comrades, all the efforts of the Social-Democratic leaders to destroy the unity of the movement and to drive out the Communists. Hence, our declarations at the Third and Fourth Congresses that the Social-Democratic leaders were interested in disrupting the unions while we were interested in safeguarding them. This form of the Labour movement is still necessary for us, not only during the period of struggle for power, but on the day after the winning of power. Lenin said over and over again that if we had not had the unions behind us after 1917 we should not have been able to maintain our dictatorship for a year, or even for a month. It was this organisation that enabled us to organise industry, the Red Army, and many, many other things.

LENINISM IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT MEANS THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SPLITTING THE UNIONS. We say this not from any diplomatic considerations regarding the Social-Democrats, but because it is the very

essence of Leninism.

### **Without Mass Organisation Victory is Impossible.**

Thus Leninism consists first of all in the thorough assimilation of the fact that irreconcilable Marxism is impossible without the mass organisation of the proletariat inasmuch as Marxism without mass organisation is not Marxism at all, and could never be victorious.

Yesterday we celebrated the memory of the Paris Commune. But we are striving for a VICTORIOUS Commune, for the victory of the proletariat; and the chief essential for this is the unity of the entire working class.

At the Fourth Congress we declared—and it remains absolutely true to this day—that the more the leaders of the Social-Democrats come to realise that the working class is with us in the depths of its soul, that we will inevitably win over the majority, the more they realise that we are approaching revolution, the more they will attempt to split the trade unions. They think to themselves—if the organisation of the working class must fall into the hands of the Communists, then let them have only the fragments and shreds, but not the trade unions as such, which might become an invincible weapon in their hands.

True, if we look at the British and German trade union movements, which are still in the hands of the Social-Democrats, it is difficult to believe that the unions can ever serve the needs of the proletarian revolution. But, nevertheless, they do render the revolution a very *real service*. The Russian unions were little better when they were in the hands of the Mensheviks; but the discipline, the habit of organisation, and all the other good characteristics, which had developed in the trade unions in the course of decades became incomparable revolutionary weapons in the hands of the Communists.

THEREFORE, ANYONE WHO THINKS SERIOUSLY OF PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION, OF WINNING OVER THE MAJORITY OF THE WORKING CLASS, MUST GUARD AGAINST A SUPERFICIAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THE QUESTION OF THE UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. The bolshevisation of the party can be attained by the tactic of sincere struggle for the unity of the trade union movement, and the unremitting struggle for Communism within the movement.

The greater the provocation on the part of the Social-Democrats the more we must manoeuvre, the tighter we must close our ranks in the trade unions and work from within. Why? Because it is in the unions that we find our class brothers.

Here the silly comparison has been made that the trade unions can only be won over by force—just as in the case of the Bourgeois Government. The Bourgeois Government differs from the trade unions by the fact that the trade unions are composed of our brothers by class, that is to say, of the workers who, notwithstanding all their delusions and even their occasional counter-revolutionary attitude, can be counted on to make the revolution when the crucial moment arrives.

### **Schumacherism**

Much has been said in the German Party regarding the “new tactics” in the trade union question. In what does this new tactic consist. In “Schumacherism.” Unfortunately in our German Party we have not only the complete Schumachers, but the semi-Schumachers, that is to say, people supporting this mistaken tactic more or less inconsistently. It would be much better if we had the “complete” Schumacher before us on the tribune, and could lay bare the whole question.

Schumacher says that we are divided from the Social-Democrats by an entire philosophy, therefore, you see, we cannot remain in the same trade unions with them. It is very true that our philosophies are entirely different, they are the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, and we are Communists. Who does not know that? It was not necessary for Schumacher to reveal this fact. Or else they say—these dogs, the Social-Democratic leaders, are provoking us, in order to drive us out of the unions. That means—we must go. But it is just, because they are dogs and lackeys of the bourgeoisie that they are trying to provoke us and split the unions. We have not considered this matter as sentimentalists, but as serious proletarian revolutionaries, and we therefore say that dogs will remain dogs, and lackeys of the bourgeoisie will remain lackeys of the bourgeoisie. And in spite of them we must exert self-control, and go to any lengths to win over the majority of our class comrades in the unions, that is, in the organisation which is still led by the cursed lackeys of the bourgeoisie, but which will certainly not be led by them forever. The time will come when we shall win over the majority of the workers in them. No matter what the cost may be we shall not retreat from the task of winning over this central organisation or the working class.

The Mensheviks in Russia were also lackeys of the bourgeoisie; they also wished to drive us from the unions. We waged a similar struggle here in Russia. But we said, the greater the provocation the greater effort will be to remain in the trade unions, and win over the majority of the workers in spite of everything. We have had elements in the Comintern from the very beginning who have tried to make us take a different course. Even at the First and Second World Congresses there were comrades, particularly from England and America who said: "We cannot remain within these unions." Lenin fought against them, as Leftists.

Now these comrades say, "We are all Leninists, but we

want to leave the reformist unions; we want to create a new form of Labour organisation; we have nothing in common with the old unions.” But we hold firmly to the tactic of the Comintern which is to work within the unions, whatever they may be, and this viewpoint we cannot change. Lenin was able to send the first of our Party workers, its original founders, into the reactionary unions organised by the Czar’s gendarmes. He sent them even into the unions organised by General Zubatov in order to bring the workers under our influence. I must admit that Dissman, Grossman, D’Arragona, and Gompers are also gendarmes, and reactionaries—we know well enough what rascals they are—objectively they are no better than General Zubatov. But if we entered these unions in Russia in order to win over the majority of the workers, then we must certainly support these Zubatov-Grossman and Zubatov-D’Arragona unions. If we do not do this, it means that it is only in words that we are anxious to win over the majority of the working class. Perhaps you really wish to do this, but do not know how. It is impossible to win over the majority if you do not wish to remain within the unions. In that case you will be merely adding grist to the mill of these Gendarmes. Schumacher may consider himself a Leftist, but he is really working for Grossman and Dissman.

### **We Must Remain in the Unions.**

Therefore, we cannot allow any compromise on this question. If this question should arise again in International Congress then the Comintern must state clearly: WE MUST REMAIN WITHIN THE UNIONS. Schumacher’s arguments have no effect whatsoever on a real Leninist; they act rather as a proof of the correctness of our tactics.

Why do the Social-Democratic leaders exclude us? Just



because they fear that we should be able to win over the majority of the workers in the unions. If there is any question capable or wrecking the German brother-party, it is the trade union question. (Applause.)

To-day one or the comrades said to me: "It looks as though we have been defeated in the municipal elections in ALTONA." Certainly every defeat, no matter how insignificant is unpleasant for us. But we do not belong to that type of revolutionaries who demand victory of their comrades under any and all circumstances. We know that defeats will sometimes occur. But as Communists, we also know that in spite of our defeats we must continue the struggle. HOWEVER, IF THE LENIN VIEWPOINT ON THE TRADE UNION QUESTION IS NOT STRENGTHENED WITHIN OUR GERMAN PARTY, IF IT IS NOT CLEARLY EXPRESSED IN THE TRADE UNIONS—that will be a defeat which we shall be unable to sustain.

I must state that the opposition on this question is not an opposition "professors." Certain Communist professors do everything in their power to intensify every false step on our part, but the danger of such deviations consists in the fact that they very often attract to themselves even good workers. This is especially dangerous.

As a human being I can understand that the workers clench their fists at the very name of Grossman, and that when they are starving, they prefer to buy milk for their children rather than pay in dues which will pass into the hands of the social traitors. I can quite understand this feeling, but, as the member of a class, as the member of a world party, as a class comrade-at-arms, this worker is not right. He must understand that it is necessary to pay his dues, that it is necessary to win over this organisation which belongs to every worker, that it is necessary to remain within its ranks, and that only from within will we be able to take matters entirely in our own hands. if we do not do

this our entire programme will be absolutely hopeless.

Comrades, what was it that disturbed us most of all during the time of the Russian discussion on this question? We understand that after the October defeat, after the Saxony farce, a crisis was absolutely inevitable. That is not so strange that it cannot be made good. But if the Party as such, and the very excellent workers who make up the foundation of our party have not a clear policy on the trade union question—that is a factor that causes us most uneasiness. The Party cannot carry out a Communist policy if its policy on this question of questions, is not clear. An absolutely clear policy must be established on this question, upon which we must leave nothing unsaid. It is not a question merely of words, but of compromise, and we must be absolutely clear upon it.

The Frankfurt resolution of our German Communist Party is theoretically correct. It expressed fundamentally the true Leninist tactics on the trade union questions, but we know that as every book has its fate, this resolution may also have the same fate—it may remain on paper. We have had many discussions on this with the German comrades, with the best proletarians of Europe, who have many strong points. But their weak points consists partly in the fact that in the trade union question they are still struggling with themselves in their innermost souls. They have not yet fully digested this question. They are afraid that it might be opportunism to remain within the unions. Comrades, we must bring this internal struggle to an end.

Schumacher has quoted a great many resolutions from the transition period of the German Communist Party, the time of the formulation of opinion on the trade unions, and of vacillation. These resolutions do not prove anything for us. We have had many vacillations on different questions, we were not born ready-made Communists. No case can be invented from the fact that we vacillated. That was a moulting period. But if

this period lasted for years, then it would be a misfortune for the Party. Schumacher's "proof" proves nothing. As we hoped, he has already been theoretically defeated at Frankfurt. The important thing now is that he should also be defeated in practice.

I had a conversation with one of the Berlin comrades, with one of the proletarians who form the foundation of the Party. I received the impression that he felt rather ashamed before the masses. He asked why we should remain in the Social-Democratic Union, saying that in the factory where he worked, there were 30,000 workers, and that only a couple of thousand of these were organised in the unions, and the remainder did not even want to hear about the unions—he seemed to be ashamed to go to them and say, "You must enter the Social-Democratic trade unions. He considers these 30,000 the best. No, comrades, we are well acquainted with the masses; we have worked with thousands and millions of them. We already know these masses who say: "You can't lure me into the unions—it doesn't pay to bother with that little organisation." They pretend outwardly to be very radical, but often do not enter the Party, and do not take in the revolutionary struggle. And then comes a moment, when they say: "Where was the Party, when we were in error? Does not the Party exist to correct our mistakes?" Certainly without these 30,000 we cannot make the revolution, but we must convince them of the fact that it is necessary to remain in the unions. If we do not accomplish this task we shall be unable to overthrow the bourgeois regime.

The German Party must clear up this question thoroughly. We must forgive all mistakes, but this question remains like a stone around our necks. Just when we should be free to swim we may be ruined by this very stone, that is, by the fact that we have no clear viewpoint on the trade union question.

If Schumacher insists that he speaks here in the name of

20,000 comrades, that is his particular type of local patriotism. We know these isolated local unions already from the time of the late Legien. At that time they were approximately the same in number.

We hope that 19,000 of the 20,000 will support the Communist International, when it declares a definite course. We shall have to part with the remainder for the time being, we cannot compromise with them. Schumacher is also a soldier of the revolution. The Party has decided, and he must carry out this decision not only pro-forma, but in practical work. I do not think that the German Party will suffer this "Schumacherism" much longer.

Schumacher says: "We, in reality do not in the least advocate withdrawal from the unions, we do not say abandon the unions, we "only" advocate the organisation of independent unions and the slogan "industrial unions." We think that the Party should support that slogan.

Does Comrade Schumacher really consider us so naive not to understand the real situation if he said this in somewhat different words? He wishes to confront us with facts that will destroy the Party policy on the trade union question.

### **Back to the Unions.**

We must rally the workers who have left the unions under one slogan: BACK INTO THE UNIONS. YES, BACK INTO THE REACTIONARY, COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY, MENSHEVIST UNIONS, WHICH ARE STILL UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS, IN ORDER TO MAKE THEM A CENTRE TO UNITE OUR FORCES. If we do not set forth and carry out these demands we shall be mere revolutionary babblers and not Leninists, we shall never be able to destroy the bourgeois structure, we shall never be

able to win over seriously the majority of the working class. Therefore, this is no time for jesting, and we do not believe Schumacher when he says "we are not advocating withdrawal from the unions."

That which Schumacher offers us is nothing but propaganda for withdrawal, and the objective meaning of it is this: "Out of the Labour movement in its present state, with all its weaknesses," and that means, "out of the working class in its present state." We must not be deluded. We cannot organise big unions of our own in Germany, and even if we were to organise them we could not carry on a successful economic struggle, and were we to attempt to carry on such a struggle, we should lose.

Do not cherish illusions! The factory and shop committees are the new form of organisation, but the unions remain, even after the revolution, as we see from the example of the Russian revolution. The Soviets are a new revolutionary form of the Labour movement, but they cannot be created weekly on Mondays and Thursdays. They can be organised only when revolution is already knocking at the window. The real form of the present day Labour movement which was valued by Marx and Lenin, is the trade union, with all its deficiencies, and weaknesses, and all the advantages which for the time being, are gone to the Social-Democrats.

Absolute clarity is essential on this question. If Comrade Schumacher does not submit to our decisions, he can no longer belong to the Comintern. If he organises 20,000 workers in order to steal them away from the unions, from the tactics of the united front, he is taking away from us 20,000 class fighters, instead of throwing them into the struggle against the Social-Democrats. At best he neutralises and dismembers them, and makes them a force objectively hostile to us.

## No Question of “Marriage” with the Amsterdamers.

Now I will pass on to the second question, as to what our attitude” should be towards the International Federation of Trade Unions at Amsterdam. This, in my opinion, is only of secondary importance. Comrade Bordiga declared here that in his opinion we are giving the whole movement an “extreme right” character in drawing up a plan for entry into certain negotiations with Amsterdam. In comparison with the so-called ultra-Left wing, we have more than once been accused of rightism. At the Third World Congress, Comrade Lenin said: “I am speaking here as a ‘right,’ against the theory of attack.” Why should we be afraid of being called “rights” now? There is nothing so terrible un that. THE REAL LEFT LENINIST WING REMAINS THERE WHERE THE WORKERS ARE. THE REAL REVOLUTIONARY ORIENTATION OF LENINISM CONSISTS IN THE WINNING OVER OF THE BROAD MASSES FROM THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS.

A “memorandum” of the German delegation has been quoted here, which has only come to my notice to-day. I do not know exactly when it was written,\* and I ask the Congress not to form a judgment of our opinion on the basis of that memorandum. It does not express the opinion of the Russian Party. If you wish to know our opinion, we shall be very glad to state it. But the memorandum is incorrect. In the memorandum it speaks as if we were striving for a “conjugal” union with Amsterdam. I am afraid that the memorandum was written by comrades who actually prepared a similar “marriage” in the “Labour” Government of Saxony. They put

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\* The German delegation subsequently explained that the memorandum was written at the Very beginning of the dispute, and was intended merely for the information of the Russian and French delegations. But in view of the fact that the document was quoted at the Congress, Comrade Zinoviev referred to it.

the question so—either union with Amsterdam or withdrawal from the unions.

But the question may be presented in another light. Compare it with the case of the Russian Mensheviks. We have not yet concluded a nuptial union with them. Neither did we leave the unions where we were oppressed by them. It took us 20 years to win over the unions and not 20 months. If you wish only that guiding policy which will guarantee victory within 20 months, I am afraid we cannot give you that. Only charlatans will take upon themselves a job of this kind. We know that in spite of everything We shall win over the majority of the workers. If we fail to do that then there will be no proletarian revolution. There can be no question of “marriage” with Amsterdam. We witnessed such a marriage with the Social-Democrats last year in Saxony, but not in the Russian revolution. Here we shall never see such a thing.

This emphasises still further the fact that the German Party must think out this question to the very end. If at the question time it still objects to certain negotiations with Amsterdam, its objection is not, I believe, on International, but on purely National grounds, i.e., because in the German Party there is still internal dissension on the question of trade union unity.

I have talked with several comrades, and it seems to me that some of them think thus: “Let the Russian unions themselves enter Amsterdam; we will say nothing against that, only in Germany we should not, be forced to work within the Social-Democratic Unions.” Can such an outlook be considered International? Under no circumstance. If the Russian unions were to enter Amsterdam by themselves without the Profintern that would mean the actual capitulation of the Profintern and the Comintern. That will never happen. OUR RUSSIAN UNIONS ARE LENINIST UNIONS. THEY ARE TO BE CONSIDERED IN THIS RELATION NOT AS RUSSIAN UNIONS, BUT AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF

THE RED INTERNATIONAL OF LABOUR UNIONS, which will carry out all the directions of the International.

The German comrades must look at this question not from a purely German, but from an International viewpoint.

### **Conquest of the Unions not Proceeding Rapidly Enough.**

If we look at the Congress we observe first of all three groups of delegates; the countries where the Communists have a majority in the unions, as, for instance, in France. In such cases it is simple enough to adopt a decision on fusion with the reformists, the minority will simply have to submit to the majority.

The second group consists of delegates from those countries where on the whole we are not an essential factor in the trade union movement. These comrades are more or less indifferent to our dispute. To the third group belongs Germany, and part also of Czecho-Slovakia, where we have not yet a solid majority behind us, though very nearly, and where fierce conflicts between the Communists and Social-Democrats are taking place. Here the question is the most difficult. And I must acknowledge that, we realise this fact. But these difficulties cannot be determinate factors.

Both from the International and the National viewpoint the proposition of the Russian delegation is absolutely correct.

Comrade Bordiga says, and it is repeated in the memorandum, that it would be a moral defeat for us if we were to make a certain proposal to the gentlemen of Amsterdam, and they should refuse us. What a strange viewpoint. If we make a proposition to our class enemies, and they reject it, does that mean that we are morally defeated? Nothing of the kind. Take an example from State affairs. The Russian Soviet Government made a proposal to the International Bourgeoisie for



disarmament. The bourgeoisie rejected the proposition. Does that mean that we are morally killed? If we declare to the Social-Democrats: "We are for the unity of the present International trade union movement," and they are against this, will that be our moral death? Not at all. Look how the Berlin *Vorwaerts* rages against any unity of the International trade union movement on an International scale. Why? Because they are afraid that this may become a weapon directed against them. But it may be anything you like, but never a weapon against us.

### **How the Profintern Originated.**

This memorandum intimates further that the German delegation and the whole German Party were against the foundation of the Red Profintern, But that once it was founded, it was necessary to preserve the old forms. That is not correct. You don't know the history of your own party very well. It was not the German Party but Paul Levi who was against the founding of the Profintern. That is a very different thing. The German Party was with us on the question of founding the Profintern. The Red Profintern was founded at a moment when it looked as though we could break through the enemy lines by a frontal attack, and quickly win over the trade unions. I remember the first organising meeting of the Profintern very well. D'Arragona participated in the meeting in the name of the Italian delegation, and Robert Williams on behalf of the British, and some of these people proposed "left" amendments, and resolutions. We may even recall the fact that a Spanish professor came to us in Moscow at that time and declared: "Although I am a reformist, the Spanish workers are Communists and they insist that I adhere to the Third International." We answered him, "as long as you are not a

Communist you cannot be accepted in the Communist International.” That was how matters stood at that period. It was during the time when we thought that we should win over the majority of the workers in the shortest possible space of time. You know, comrades, that after that the movement was on the ebb. All the problems, all the tactical difficulties of the Comintern during these five years are rooted in the fact that the development was much slower than we had expected. The Social-Democrats in places grew stronger, in trade union work as well as in the political field. Now we must fight with them more slowly, by more difficult, roundabout means. This is the new fact which you do not wish to understand.

### **What is New in the British Trade Union Movement.**

Further, we are asked, what is there new in England? The new so called left wing, which is not really left at all—that is merely an illusion. Consider comrades, the fact that England is the country with the most developed Labour movement. Here Wynkoop was undoubtedly right when he maintained that in this sense the British Labour movement was decisive. In England we are now going through the beginning of a new chapter, in the Labour movement. We do not know exactly when the Communist Mass Party of England will come, whether only through the Stewart—MacManus door, or through some other door. And it is entirely possible comrades, that the Communist Mass Party may still appeal through still another door—we cannot lose sight of that fact.

What is now going on in England has at least the same historical significance as what is going on in other countries in Europe.

I have already said to the German comrades, “It is perfectly natural that we should all be attached to our own party, to our

organisation. I am attached to Leningrad, other comrades are constantly citing examples from Ludwigshaffen or Hamburg—that is quite comprehensible. But, comrades, with all due respect to Ludwigshaffen, Hamburg, and Leningrad, I still say openly that London. Also has a certain importance, and is no less important than the other cities I have named.

What is taking place in Great Britain has a world historical importance. We cannot be blind, we must see this, otherwise we should have had to form a German-Russian or perhaps only a European International. But we founded something rather different. We founded a WORLD International, a WORLD Party. Therefore, the German comrades must not say, “What have we to do with the Russian or with the British unions?” We have much to do with them, inasmuch as they are a very important part of the present day Labour movement.

What new thing has happened? Just this, that the Amsterdam International has begun to fall to pieces, that an extremely important process has begun in the British Labour movement. I am not suffering from any illusions. I am quite aware of the fact that the British Leftists are still by no means revolutionaries, that they are still no better than the German “left” Social-Democrats. But their appearance is an important event. We must understand this, or we shall not be able to form a proletarian mass movement in Great Britain, much less bring about a proletarian revolution there.

Now a proposition is being made to the Russian trade union movement. Is this question of any importance for Russia and for England, I ask you? Yes, and a very great importance. The answer which the Russian trade unions give here in Moscow will have important consequences in London.

What should the answer be? The answer should be that demanded by the whole International. Some think that diplomatic considerations may have some influence here. That is nonsense. MacDonald and his guard fear rapprochement

between the British and Russian movement as the plaque.

If the German memorandum states that this rapprochement interferes with us in our work of mobilising the masses against the “Experts’ Report,” then I must say that is such saintly simplicity that I can find no expression for it. Quite the contrary, Comrade Heckert. You accumulated such an amount of parliamentary experience in Saxony (Laughter) that it hardly suits you to display such saintly simplicity. Do you really think that MacDonald or Grossman of *Vorwaerts* sincerely believes in a union between us and them? This would be a “union” in which these gentlemen would lose a good 50 per cent. of their votes.

On the contrary, the first question which we should put to these if the affair should reach the point of negotiation, would be: What about the Experts’ Report? We should place them against the wall; we should force them to answer; we should tell them what we thought of the policy of the Second and Amsterdam Internationals in the problem in the Experts’ Report. Their policy is the policy of 1914. It is merely a continuation of social treachery, by different means. It is the same deception of the masses that occurred on August 4th, 1914. And so, these gentlemen wish to carry on this affair stealthily, and at the moment when we may be able to put this question on an International scale they will be embarrassed and not we.

### **Conclusions of the German Comrades Incorrect.**

Thus, all the arguments brought forward in the German memorandum are entirely artificial. Only one obstacle stands before the German comrades. This is simply the fact that they themselves, in the depths of their souls, have not yet rejected “Schumacherism.”

We must be grateful to the Amsterdam International at least for the fact that they have given us the opportunity to place the question again before the German Party at an International Congress. If anyone really thinks that the question has anything to do with a nuptial union with Amsterdam then there is no use discussing the matter any further. If I had wished for a marriage with Amsterdam, then I should deserve to be pushed out. This, at least, is what I should do with those who really were anxious for such a union.

We wish to carry on our battle as the interests of the class struggle demand. And these interests now demand that we should attempt to preserve the unity of the trade union movement by roundabout methods, and win over a majority in the unions. We hoped that our frontal attack might be victorious. That did not happen. Now we must set ourselves the same problem, but by a slower process. We must conquer by whatever means possible. Whoever sincerely stands for work within the trade unions in his own country must also be for the tactics of unity on an International scale. This is quite clear. And only those whose stomachs are out of order on a National scale have the same ailment internationally. (Laughter—"approved.") It is in such cases that memoranda about marriages are written. I suppose that this episode may be entirely liquidated finally. I am not afraid that it will seriously injure the German Party. It is an illusion. At the moment when we really spread among the masses the slogan of the unity of the trade union movement, the Social-Democratic gentlemen will find it more difficult to fight against us as shamelessly as they are now doing—if only the question really becomes International.

**Carry the Slogan of "Trade Union Unity" to the Masses.**

I can only agree with our German comrades on one point,

and that is that the question is not yet prepared, and cannot be let loose among the masses in a few weeks. In this they are right. We must certainly do everything to prepare this work. We must not begin the united front only from above—that question has already been considered. We must carry on our preparatory work among the masses for a period extending over months. If the German comrades propose this then all our disagreements would vanish at once. It is necessary to decide at once that we must prepare our foundation in the masses, that we must organise our propaganda of “trade union unity” on an International scale—that we begin at once to arrange meetings all over the world on this subject, that we prepare the soil, and then begin our negotiations. There is nothing to be gained by haste. But we must also bear in mind that there is a new factor to be taken into consideration. We exist, we are leaders and wish to remain leaders. By virtue of this fact; we must see future events when they are still in embryo. In two years even idols will see this. But the tendencies are already clear. We must now enter upon new activities.

Thus we shall prepare the soil and go before the masses with this slogan of unity. We have nothing to fear. Let our enemies exclude us. Our answer is a mass campaign for unity on an International scale—in England, in Germany, in France, in the whole world.

The memorandum says:

“The working class regard these manoeuvres which do not bring immediate results with a certain lack of confidence.” That is not so. The workers are not children. They know that the class struggle is war in which strategy is necessary.

The workers understand this very well. Let me give you a little example. Everyone who is acquainted with the psychology of the present day Russian worker knows that the policy of our party enjoys more popularity among the masses in the sphere of International politics, in that sphere where we

must manoeuvre with our enemies, than in an other sphere. The masses enjoy this; they say to themselves: "Our party knows how to manoeuvre, they know how to outwit our enemies, and protect our interests. It seems to me that it is the same in Germany. You know that the mistakes of the leaders usually re-act on the masses. The masses thoroughly understand our policy in relation to the counter-revolutionary leaders of the German Social-Democrats.

### **We Must Liquidate Schumacherism on an International Scale.**

Our policy must now consist of a decisive liquidation of Schumacherism in the German Party and in the International as a whole. The obstacles are great. The bourgeoisie are still strong. They are undoubtedly tottering, but we must not over-estimate the extent of their weakness; we must not create illusions for ourselves. That will not help matters in the least. The bourgeoisie are still far stronger than we are. Certainly they will be destroyed; we shall crush them, if only we do not commit blunders. But the greatest danger for the German Party is that at the present time it is prone to under-estimate the strength of the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats. We understand the revolutionary feelings, the psychology of the German workers without whom there would not be any Communist International. But that is not enough. They must also be real pupils of Lenin and see in that light the strength and the cleverness of the bourgeoisie, and not under-estimate it.

And so, "enough of "Schumacherism" on an international scale. We are considering certain steps in relation to Amsterdam, but we do not say that this must lead to a "nuptial" union with them. We summon you not to an "extreme right"

revolution, as Comrade Bordiga has said, but forward, against the band of bourgeois lackeys, to the capture of the majority of the present unions, not only on a National, but on an International scale. (Prolonged applause.)

## **THE WORKS OF MARX AND ENGELS.**

Rysanov moved the following resolution:

“The Fifth Congress of the Communist International welcomes the decisions of the Thirteenth Party Congress of the Russian Communist Party on the necessity of publishing as soon as possible all the works and letters of Marx and Engels with a historico-critical commentary. Only an edition of this kind will be a worthy memorial to the founders of scientific Communism by making a thorough study of the history of the theory and practice of revolutionary Marxism possible for large sections of the proletariat.

The Congress deems it necessary also to publish in addition to this international edition of all the works of these writers, an edition of selected works by Marx and Engels for the proletariat, which, must be taken in hand immediately under the supervision of the Communist International. All such editions must contain, beside Marx and Engels works which are of international importance, also their works dealing with questions which are of particular interest for the proletariat of the respective countries.

The Congress invites all the Parties adhering to the Communist International as well as individual members, to supply the Marx-Engels Institute of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union with material bearing on the life and activity of Marx and Engels, thereby giving valuable assistance to the Institute. Only with the active collaboration of all Communist brother parties will it be possible to do justice to



such a tremendous task as the publication of the connected works and letters of Marx and Engels, and the preparation of all the necessary material for their scientific biography in connection with the history of Socialism and of the Labour movement of the 19th century.”

Just a few words in justification of this resolution. The discussion on the programme, as well as the interesting discussion in the German Commission on Rosa Luxemburg’s accumulation theory have shown how necessary a thorough study of Marxism is for the young Communist generation. We already are running the risk of having in our midst people who know Luxemburgism and Leninism from beginning to end, but who have not the least notion of the A.B.C. of Marxism. This was shown by the discussions.

My old party friend, Mehring published the pre-1849 works of Marx and Engels. But this edition was also far from complete. Suffice it to say that until the publication of the “Communist Manifesto” he was not able to represent German ideology as was done by Marx and Engels who dealt with the most reactionary as well as with the most revolutionary digressions of the bourgeoisie. After considerable trouble I have at last succeeded in getting these manuscripts. We have now photographic facsimilies of all unpublished manuscripts by Engels and Marx. In addition to the manuscript on German ideology, we have a number of manuscripts written by Engels in the beginning of the eighties of the last century, as the supplement of his anti-Duehring. These manuscripts were hidden in the true sense of the word, for I have ascertained that no one knew of them except Bernstein.

Just one more point. Among Engels most important work after the death of Marx is the publication of the Second and Third Volumes of “Capital.” Only those who had something to do with the manuscripts of Marx and Engels can fully appreciate the colossal work done by Engels in his old age in

addition to his other work for the International. But we suspected long ago that this was by no means all.

And if I tell you that the well-known theories on surplus value are taken from a manuscript which is twice as big, you will understand how many more interesting contributions there are to the question as to who, is right. Luxemburg or, let us say, Bukharin. To understand theoretically all the laws of capitalist development, it is most important for us to have all the investigations of Marx who was the first of all the scientific, political economists to make an attempt to explain the entire productive process their society, which they were unable to understand. From this viewpoint, it is most important that we should publish now in this complete edition of Marx and Engels, as a third part, all the manuscripts of Marx without abbreviations and revision, just as Marx gave them himself.

Our main task consists in publishing a complete and technically perfect edition in a couple of thousand copies for all big libraries. But we have also another task before us which is not less important. We can hardly expect that an edition of 50 volumes (and there will be hardly less) is within the reach of everyone. We must make a selection of the work of Marx and Engels for every country. This selection will contain all the most important works of Marx and Engels describing all the phases of their development. The first part, the general part must be in the edition for all countries. Then comes the second part, adapted to the national requirements of the various countries.

In the course of the last few years, I have been able to add considerably to our collection of Marx and Engels' manuscripts, and I shall be very grateful if every member of the Party (and not only the Party) will help us in this work. My request to all Parties is that you send everything (for even what seems uninteresting to you is interesting for us) connected with Marx and Engels to the Marx-Engels Institute through the

Comintern.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

## THE QUESTION OF THE INTELLECTUALS.

**Clara Zetkin:** The intellectual question stares at us to-day from tens of thousands of hungry eyes. The crisis of the intellectuals is at the same time the crisis of brain work in bourgeois society. It proclaims that bourgeois society can no longer be protected and developed of its own culture. And thus the intellectual question ceases to be only a question of the intellectual or of bourgeois society and becomes a problem of the proletariat, for it is the historic mission of the proletariat to develop all the forces of production and culture beyond the limits set them by bourgeois society.

The intellectuals live in the society of capitalist commodity production. They are subject to all its laws, and are either transformed from free men of the professions into sellers, just as the small capitalists, or they appear in the market as sellers of their own commodity—labour power. Marx pointed out in the Communist Manifesto very clearly that the intellectuals, the scientists and the artists are to-day nothing but sellers of goods. And this fact determines the situation where the intellectual in reality is allied with the proletariat through his opposition to capital. The historical interest of the intellectuals require them to fight alongside the proletariat for the overthrow of bourgeois production and bourgeois class rule.

We see, however, that this is generally not the case; that in reality the intellectuals feel themselves firmly bound to bourgeois society. This is explained by the historical development of the intellectual from a particular social class. They are most closely bound up with the development of capitalist production and with the rise of bourgeois class

society.

The intellectuals occupied a favourable position in bourgeois society when measured by the standard of life of the working class and because of this, felt themselves independent of the proletariat. But the class interest of the bourgeoisie—profit and accumulation—was absolutely incompatible with a position of preference for the brain workers. In accordance with the entire historical nature of the bourgeoisie as a ruling class, it had to attempt to destroy this position. And it broke it by bringing about equilibrium between the supply of and demand for brain workers. As the intellectuals situation grew worse, an intellectual problem arose. It was a Gorgon head for bourgeois society, for it announced that bourgeois society was no longer able to afford the intellectuals such a social position as was compatible with their occupation and station. A characteristic mass symptom was the fight of the intellectuals against the higher educational and professional occupation of women. The fear of the appearance of women in the higher professions showed that bourgeois society was no longer able to give the intellectuals an income nor so to arrange family conditions that women were assured a living, and that on the other hand the intellectuals were afraid, because of fear of competition, to extend higher education and professional occupations to women.

But other characteristic mass phenomena appeared as effects of the development of an intellectual problem in bourgeois society. Since about the eighties of the 19th century we see the rise of social reformers of all kinds—socialist clergymen, single taxers, etc.”

These reform tendencies manifest themselves in Germany as pulpit Socialism. In France we see the bourgeois radical parties decorating themselves more or less with social demands. In England the reformist movement is classically manifested in the Fabian Society, in the so-called constructive

Socialism, as in large degree represented within the Labour Party. A straight line of development leads from the social reformers to imperialism. An expression of Cecil Rhodes, the well-known British imperialist, is characteristic of imperialism: "Imperialism or revolution." That is exactly the position. When the bourgeois reformists thought they could carry out their reforms without touching profits or affecting the rule of the bourgeoisie, they were compelled to seek an economic basis for the reform in the mother country in the exploitation of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Thus we find that imperialism finds its champions just among the intellectuals. As protagonists of the imperialist idea they put through the deception and swindling of the masses which enabled competitive armaments of all so-called civilised nations to be carried through. They produced the mass psychosis under which the war could be carried on for years. It is a historical nemesis that there is scarcely a class more heavily hit by the effect of the world war than the intellectuals.

The desperate condition of the intellectuals is an international phenomenon. Of course, it is most desperate in Germany because there the effects of the war on all participating nations are intensified by the effects of the defeat. But nothing is more false than to attribute the misery, the intellectuals to be the fate of a defeated nation. The same phenomena is seen in victorious France. There the incomes of the intellectuals have also fallen heavily, in a large number of cases to the income of the highly skilled worker.

The same symptoms of the intellectual crisis are apparent in the richest and greatest countries of the world. At present we are witnessing in all capitalist countries the entry of the petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals into the political arena to an extent hitherto unprecedented. The strongest political expression of the intellectual population as a mass phenomenon is fascism. In all countries the intellectuals are not only the

proposers of fascism, but are also the creators of its ideology. The ideology of fascism is only a continuation of imperialist ideals mixed with various national and social ingredients.

Alongside fascism the political activity of the intellectuals has also produced another phenomenon, which is also a mass phenomenon. This is bourgeois pacifism. Bourgeois pacifism is just as much a successor of the social reform movement of the intellectuals as fascism, with the single difference that it is not based on the social force, of a section of the population in process of pauperisation, but that it is principally supported by certain sections of the bourgeoisie, those outside the big trusts: the smaller manufacturers, small commercial men, civil servants and intellectuals of all sorts.

The Communist International appeals to the suffering intellectuals, as the great tribune of the people which represents the interest of all exploited classes, with all its energy. The Communist Parties come to the intellectuals with the realisation of the importance which the intellectuals may have as allies of the proletariat in the fight for power. An alliance which we should not over-estimate; for the entire mental attitude and class situation of the intellectuals tell us that the intellectuals will never be champions of the revolution as they were for the bourgeoisie. But nevertheless we must not underestimate their alliance. The drawing of large masses of intellectuals as our allies into the fight for power will render impossible all such organisations as the “Technische Nothilfe” (Emergency Technical Aid) in Germany, etc. The intellectuals can be of tremendous importance for the disruption of the capitalist State.

After the conquest of power it will be of the greatest importance for the further development of production to have a sufficient number of scientific and technical forces at our command. The great role which our assistants from the ranks of the intelligentsia can play for us, the revolutionary

proletariat, will be especially manifest in such countries relatively poor in natural reaches, as Germany, or in agrarian and peasant countries blockaded and isolated, by surrounding capitalist States.

When we attempt to win over the intellectuals, our first and fundamental rule must be to give all of them Communism, as a revolutionary fighting ideology of the proletariat as well as a creative ideology of construction. We must make it clear to them that the Communists must at first be destroyers in order to be able to become creative. We must also make ourselves loyal representatives of their demands in the sense that the class rule of the bourgeoisie is not able to relieve the misery of the intellectuals nor to solve the crisis of brain labour. We must decisively reject any caste or guild policy. Such a policy would be sharply contradicted by the spirit Communism which seeks the overcoming of all caste lines.

We must exploit all social contradictions manifested in the camp of the intellectuals, and in their attitude to the national question show them that his question can only be solved as a part of the international revolutionary class struggle.

But every Communist must decisively refuse to let the Communist Party be flooded with intellectuals. Only those intellectuals should be admitted who have really proved their mettle, of whom we can be certain that they have already destroyed all the social distinctions in their mind which to-day still separate them from the proletariat.

During the fight for the conquest of power, the proletariat will again and again learn what a vacillating ally the intellectual is. We must reckon with that and must not be disappointed if, whenever it seems likely that the class rule of the proletariat will be overthrown, the intellectuals desert the camp or the revolution. The difficult transition period will not reveal the intellectuals as heroes of their ideals, but rather as practical politicians. But comrades, in spite of this we must not

forget that a corps of intellectuals will grow up who with clear eyes stand with the Communists. These intellectuals will render us very valuable services, not only in that they will fight with us, but they will help us in our constructive work, they will serve as examples for large numbers of intellectuals.

The effect of the proletarian dictatorship in Soviet Russia has naturally been much more important and educational. In Soviet Russia, the dictatorship was the first decisive cutting of the Gordian knot of the intellectual crisis. A large number of the intellectuals came from the petty bourgeoisie. The intellectuals therefore supplied the leaders in the fight against Tsarism. A number of the intellectuals even went further; they no longer wanted the bourgeois revolution: their goal was the social revolution. The social revolutionary, the Menshevik, etc., were for a time the champions of the social revolution until the point where the social revolution became a reality. The majority of the intellectuals then went over to the camp of the counter-revolution. The intellectuals sabotaged the revolution. They were the agents of the counter revolution at home and abroad. This forced the Soviet Government to proceed with extreme vigour against the guilty individuals. Then in addition there was the suspicion that a new ruling class could develop out of the intellectuals. This explains why deviations from the correct Communist line were to be found in the attitude of the Russian proletariat to the Russian intelligentsia. The intellectual policy of the Soviet Government is conscious of the fact that a caste division between proletariat and intellectuals is un-Communistic. It is not its purpose to create new castes, but to overcome all castes and classes. The enrolment of the intellectuals in Communist work will solve a number of problems.

We know very well that the Union of Socialist Republics must pay a heavy price for the fact that the proletarian dictatorship is acting as a teacher to the revolutionary



proletariat of other countries. In the Soviet Republic first it will be possible to do that which bourgeois society with all its culture was not able to achieve, namely to unite the empire of the Galilean and of Caesar in a synthesis, to fuse the cultural values of antiquity with the cultural values of Christianity in a higher culture, of the culture of Communism. Here will the man of the future grow up who will neither bear the mark of an intellectual caste nor that of a proletarian, who will be nothing but a harmonious, physically and intellectually, fully developed man.

The most frightful conditions of life force the intellectuals to ally themselves with the revolutionary proletariat. We as Communists have, through our realisation of the process of history, already obtained in advance the freedom which Communist society will realise. We will, therefore, answer, resolute and ready to act, "we will."

(Prolonged applause.)

## **REPORT ON THE ORGANISATION QUESTION.**

The Fourth Congress of the Communist International instructed the Executive Committee to collect all the decisions of the Third and Fourth Congresses which supplement the statutes of the Communist International adopted at the Second Congress. The Orgbureau of the Executive Committee of the Communist International adopted at its Enlarged Session drafted statutes which the Organisation Commission of the Fifth Congress accepted as a basis. After thorough discussion, the Organisation Commission adopted unanimously with slight amendments the statutes published in the Congress Bulletin, No. 18. Of the statutes adopted at the Second Congress only three paragraphs have been retained 2, 3, and 10: To the latter

the following addition is made: "No country can have more than one Communist Party adhering to the Communist International."

The eighth paragraph of the old statutes on trade unions, and the 14th paragraph on Party representatives in the Executive Committee were eliminated, as the Fourth Congress established new relations between the Comintern and the Profintern: formerly trade unions participated in the Congresses of the Communist International, at present trade unions adhering to the Profintern, participate in Profintern Congresses, while a Committee of Action has been formed as a link between the Comintern and the Profintern.

The Fourth Congress also abolished Party representation in the Executive of the Comintern. In lieu of it, it was decided to elect the Executive Committee at the Congress itself. This decision was put into practice already at the Fourth Congress. The same will be done at the Fifth Congress. Paragraphs, 1, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 22, 23, 33, 34 and 35 of the new statutes have been altered and revised on the basis of the paragraphs of the old statutes. Paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 have been entirely re-drafted. The 21 conditions for the admission of Parties into the Communist International, the theses of the Second Congress on the role of the Communist Party in the proletarian revolution and the organisation decisions of the Third and Fourth Congresses serve as material for the elaboration of the above mentioned 19 paragraphs.

I now come to the paragraphs of the new statutes. The first paragraph of the old statutes says : "The New International Worker's Association has been established for the organisation of joint action of proletarians of all countries working for the same aim: the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of proletarian dictatorship and an International Soviet Republic; for the complete abolition of classes and the realisation of

Socialism, which is the first step towards the Communist social order.”

The Organisation Commission decided that it would be more correct if the New International Workers’ Association united not the proletarians of various countries, but the Communist Parties of various countries into one proletarian party, for there are Communist Parties in all the most important countries of the world, and the Communist International has become a world Communist Party.

As I have said already, the 4th, 5th, and 6th paragraphs are new paragraphs. I should like to deal with them a little more fully. In the old statutes there was no indication as to who could be a member of the Communist Party and of the Comintern. Every Party endeavoured to settle this question itself and for itself, which led, to confusion. The Organisation Commission adopted as it stood the famous formula of the first point of the statutes proposed by Comrade Lenin at the Second Congress of the ‘Russian Social-Democratic Workers’ Party—that “anyone accepting the programme and statutes of the Communist Party and of the Comintern can be a member of the Party,” etc.

As this Congress has agreed on the Bolshevisation of Communist Parties, we consider that the foundation of the Bolshevisation of the Party is Party nuclei in factories, workshops, etc. Therefore, we say in paragraph 5 that: “The basis of Party organisation and its foundation are the nuclei in the various enterprises which all Party members working in these enterprises must join.”

The Organisation Commission found it necessary to give a clearer definition of the structure of Party organisations. Therefore the 6th paragraph of the present statutes deals with the construction of the Comintern and of the Communist Parties on the basis of democratic centralism and gives a definition of democratic centralism. The 6th paragraph declares

emphatically that the decisions of Party organs must be carried out by all Party members, and that questions may be discussed only prior to the decisions of the Party organs concerned. As many Communist Parties are illegal, it was not enough to state that organs are elected. Therefore, separate provisions were made for these illegal Parties in the last paragraph of the 6th point of the Statutes.

These three points must be inserted into the statutes of all Communist Parties adhering to the Communist International.

In accordance with the old statutes, the Congresses were held annually. The Organisation Commission proposes for this period to convene Congresses once every two years. Point 7 of the statutes also stipulates that it is the business of the Congresses to decide the number of decisive votes for each section for participation in the Congress, this number depending on the membership of the respective Parties and on the importance of the respective countries. Since the Second Congress many legal Parties have become legal, which has reduced the membership of these Parties. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to determine at every Congress the number of votes and of mandates for each Party.

A new section on Enlarged Plenums was introduced into the statutes. (Article 26). The practice of convening an Enlarged Executive Committee of the Comintern attended by representatives of all Parties adhering to the Comintern, was only introduced after the Third Congress. It became evident that these enlarged plenums could get through a larger amount of work than the Congresses. Moreover, it is easier to convene them, and they are sufficiently authoritative, being attended by the representatives of all Parties. Plenums are convened for the decision of very urgent questions of the Comintern. In accordance with the statutes, enlarged plenums must be henceforth convened every six months.

New arrangements have also been made in connection with

the International Control Commission.

According to paragraph 13 of the old statutes, the most important political correspondence between the various Parties adhering to the Comintern must be conducted through the Executive Committee. Exceptions can be made in very urgent cases. But paragraph 30 of the present statutes says: "Sections adhering to the Communist International, especially sections of adjoining countries, must keep up close organisational relations among each other. Such relations can be established by means of mutual representation at conferences and congresses, and also by an exchange of leading forces. Copies of the reports of the above-mentioned representatives must be sent to the Communist International and the exchange of representatives must have the sanction of the latter. Moreover, sections such as those of the Balkan and Scandinavian countries, which have common political aims, can be formed with the sanction of the Executive Committee of the Communist International into federations working under the control of the E.C.C.I."

According to paragraph 31 all sections must make regular contributions to the Communist International.

It was resolved at the Fourth Congress that Party Congresses of the sections can take place only after the world congress. Paragraph 32 of the statutes gives the sections the right to convene congresses at any time with the sanction of the E.C.C.I. Paragraph 35 declares that Communists cannot leave their respective countries without the permission of their Central Committee, and that new arrivals (with the permission of the Central Committee) must be received into the ranks of the Communist Party of the country to which they have come. On the other hand, those who arrive without the permission of the Central Committee of the Party must not be received into the Communist Party of the country to which they have come.

I propose that these statutes be adopted unanimously.

**Rossi (Italy):** read a declaration to the effect that the left withdrew its amendments and voted for the statutes.

He added a few explanatory remarks.

The phrase in the first paragraph "Strives to win over the majority of the working class was probably taken from Lenin's theses at the Second Congress, but this is one of the concessions to the right which Lenin subsequently regretted in a letter. It is in the name of statistical data a la Hula. The Italian proposal was as follows: "To win over the largest possible sections of the working class."

It also included a stipulation prohibiting the formation of fractions: the commission rejected it because it also prohibited the formation of fractions within the Parties by the Executive Committee, whenever required. The Italian left does not admit fractions in from above.

It excluded the possibility of sympathising parties, as this implies the risk of giving the same opportunities to an opportunist party as to Communist Party.

Finally, it demanded that members of the Central Committee and the Executive Committee of the Communist International shall have at least two years' standing in parties adhering to the Communist International. The Commission was afraid that by such means too many comrades would be removed automatically, but every statute imposes limitations.

After a brief reply by Comrade Piatnitsky, the Draft Statutes were put to the vote, and adopted unanimously.

The resolution of the Executive in January plans to organise the party members who do not work in factories into street nuclei. On this question there were some misunderstandings in the various parties. The street nuclei were sometimes deemed to be an essential necessity; it is often said that the party organisation has two bases (factory nuclei and street nuclei); the street nuclei should consist not only of those comrades who do not work in factories, but also of the

unemployed, and of those comrades who are the only members in their factories, and finally, the street nuclei are sometimes considered to be the continuation of the former local groups. All this is incorrect and must be rejected. The question of the factory nuclei is an essential question, but the question of the street nuclei is not.

The small minority of members who could not be organised at their place of work are taken into other factory nuclei.

Those sections of the C.I, like the Youth International, the German Party and the French Party, which have already begun the work of reorganisation, have already obtained significant and beneficial results the Party has become more deeply rooted in the masses; the militant character of the organisation has developed; the membership has increased, etc. Complete reorganisation will greatly multiply these benefits, and will result in a really proletarian party. When our European parties and the American Party have been re-organised on the basis of factory nuclei, then we will have the first and one of the most important guarantees for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

### **Separate Aims.**

Comrade Piatnitsky reported for the Mandate Commission as follows: Mandates were given to 41 countries, comprising 336 mandates: The number of consultative votes distributed was as follows: The parties received 62 mandates; 9 organisations received 30; 6 individual mandates were granted and 70 mandates to delegates to the Profintern, making a total of 168 consultative votes.

Reporting on the strength of the Communist Parties, Comrade Piatnitsky gave the following figures:

## MEMBERSHIP OF THE SECTIONS OF THE C.I.

PARTY	IV Congress		V Congress	
	Members	Candidates	Members	Candidates
1. R.S.F.S.R.	345,000	83,000	244,466	209,753
Ukraine	40,705	12,035	39,147	37,556
White Russia	2,890	600	6,433	3,605
Armenia	2,244	2,490	1,875	2,442
Azerbaijan	6,468	2,579	7,163	10,152
Georgia	11,740	11,750	10,964	2,713
2. Germany	266,200		350,000	
			(approx.)	
3. France	78,828		50,000	5,000
4. Italy	24,638		12,000	
5. Czecho-Slovakia	170,000		130,000	
6. England	5,116		3,700	
7. Ireland	—		Latest report	
			(approx.)	
8. Bulgaria	40,000		illegal	
9. Yugoslavia	illegal		illegal	
10. Rumania	2,000		2,500	
11. Greece	—		2,200	450
	—			
12. Turkey	300		600	350
13. Poland	10,000		5,000	
			illegal	
14. Finland	—		—	
	—			
15. Esthonia	2,800		3,250	
16. Latvia	1,500		1,000	
			illegal	
17. Lithuania	—		—	
	—		illegal	
18. Sweden	12,143		12,000	
19. Norway	48,000		16,000	
	(before the split)		(C.P.)	
20. Denmark	1,200		700	
21. Holland	2,500		1,700	
22. Belgium	517		590	
23. Switzerland	5,200		4,000	
24. Austria	16,000		—	
25. Hungary	—		—	
	—			



26. Iceland	450	450
27. Spain	5,000	5,000
28. Portugal	1,500	700 (latest report dissolved)
29. United States	8,000	
	Commun ist Party	
United States	12,000	27,000
30. Canada	4,810	4,000
31. Australia	500	250
32. South Africa	200	400
33. Mexico	1,500	1,000
34. Argentine	3,500	3,500
35. Chile	2,000	2,000
36. Uruguay	2,000	600
37. Brazil	500	350
38. Japan	—	Now illegal. The party must be taken into the C.I. by the V Congress
39. China	—	800
40. Java	—	2,000
41. India	—	illegal
42. Korea	—	illegal
43. Persia	1,000	600
44. Mongolia	—	4,000
45. Egypt	—	700
46. Palestine	—	100
Youth International Communist Party of America	760,000 —	850,000 Not yet accepted

## DISTRIBUTION OF MANDATES.

Name of Country	Decisive vote	Consultative vote	Delegate to Profintern	No. of votes granted by the III Congress	Mandates granted by V Congress*
Austria	3	—	3	20	5
Azerbaijan	2	2	—	10	
America (sympathising)	9	—	—	30	
England	10	—	—	30	5
Argentina	1	—	—	5	
Armenia	1	—	—	5	
White Russia	2	—	—	—	5
Belgium	1	—	—	20	
Bulgaria	3	1	—	30	
Brazil	1	—	—	—	5
Germany	40	—	16	40	
Holland	2	1	—	20	
Greece	2	1	—	—	5
Georgia	2	2	2	10	
Denmark	2	—	—	10	
Egypt	1	—	—	—	5
Y.C.I.	15	9	—	40	
India	2	—	—	—	
Spain	3	1	—	20	10
Italy	18	—	7	40	
Canada	2	—	—	—	
China	2	2	—	—	10
Latvia	2	—	—	20	
Lithuania	2	—	2	10	
Mexico	1	—	—	5	5
Norway	8	—	—	30	
Persia	2	—	—	10	
Poland	14	3	1	30	5
Portugal	1	—	—	—	
Russia	108	1	26	40	
Rumania	4	2	—	20	20
Ukraine	9	1	—	30	
Finland	6	2	—	20	
France	22	6	6	40	20
Czecho-Slovakia	20	—	3	40	
Switzerland	3	—	—	20	
Sweden	7	—	—	—	20

\* The figures indicated in column 5 refer to the number of votes given at the Fifth Congress to countries which did not have decisive votes at previous congresses.

Yugoslavia	5	—	1	30	
Java	2	—	—	—	10
Japan	1	1	2	—	20
Esthonia	2	1	—	10	
Turkey	2	1	—	10	

The following motions of the Mandate Commission were put to the vote and carried unanimously:

1. The Fifth Congress instructs the E.C.C.I. to carry out a re-division of votes among the countries, and to present same for ratification of the sixth congress.

2. In the stenographic report, the statistical material according to country worked out by the Mandate Commission will be annexed to the report of the Mandate Commission.

## Thirty-First Session, July 8th

Chairman: Comrade KOLAROV.

Speakers: MANUILSKY, PEPPER, BUKHARIN, RUTH  
FISCHER, STANISLAVSKY.

### REPORT ON NATIONAL COLONIAL COMMISSION.

The first point on the agenda: concluding speeches on the national question by Comrades Roy and Manuilsky. Comrade Ray did not desire to speak; Comrade Manuilsky took the floor.

Manuilsky then presented the report of the National and Colonial Commission which submitted only one resolution on Central Europe, the other questions being left for the decision of the Enlarged Executive.

**Manuilsky:** Some deviations were recorded by the Commission. Roy as at the Second Congress, exaggerated the social movement in the colonies to the detriment of the national movement. He thinks that the year 1922 was characterised by the decomposition of the national movement. We have nevertheless, witnessed the success of this movement in Turkey and in Egypt.

Let us grant that in India there has been a relative development of the class struggle. But to generalise this fact to all the colonies would mean to lose sense of reality. During last year, in Tunis and Algiers, we had altogether not more than eight strikes involving 800 workers!

In regard to the colonial question, Ray reflects the nihilism of Rosa Luxemburg. The truth is that a just proportion should

be looked for between the social movement and the national movement. Can the right of self-determination become a contradiction to the interest of the revolution? Had Ray put the question in this manner, one could discuss with him.

An error of equal gravity was found to have been committed by Kreibich. He thinks that the Czecho-Slovakian Party should not permit the separation of the German territory from Czecho-Slovakia, on the plea that there was no separatist movement among the Germans. Even if that be true, the argument was unsound, because Bolshevism always insisted on the absolute right of nations to dispose of themselves. Kreibich even urged before the Commission that the only thing that could be inscribed in the Czecho-Slovakian programme was autonomy. This is nothing but a survival of the old social democracy.

The same was done by Varsky, who asserted in the Polish sub-commission that nowhere in Poland was there a compact German majority. But we know that in Upper Silesia, in districts like Kattowitz, only 4,000 out of 27,000 voters declared themselves for Poland! Two-thirds of the population of Upper Silesia, in spite of the dictatorship of the armies of the Entente, have declared themselves for Germany. The Polish comrades should take the proper view of the Upper Silesian problem, as well as in the case of Lithuania. They have recognised the right of the White Russian and Ukrainian populations to unite with the Soviet Republic. They should now take one more step.

In regard to the controversial questions, I propose that a commission appointed, comprising Bukharin, Manuisky, MacManus, Petrov, Treint, Kaizan, Katayama, Stalin, Kasparova, and Brique, to prepare definite on the national question.

### **An Explanation.**

Zinoviev: I deem it necessary to place the following explanation on record:

In my concluding speech, I quoted a passage from the speech of Comrade Zetkin on the Workers' and Peasants' Government. Comrade Zetkin has shown me a corrected copy of her speech and I realise that the uncorrected copy which I used at that time was not complete. After examining the corrected speech I realise that the differences of opinion between Comrade Clara and myself on this point are much less significant than I had imagined.

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### **REPORT OF POLITICAL COMMISSION.**

**Comrade Pepper (America)** said: The Commission accepted Comrade Varga's theses as a basis; after a thorough discussion, it made important changes, and then it unanimously adopted these theses with their amendments. There were differences of opinion on only four questions. The German delegation desired a clearer characterisation of the German situation. We can say that on essential points the theses on Germany are now entirely concrete and correct.

The second question which we discussed was whether or not we are justified in saying that a unified capitalist world economy no longer exists. After a lengthy discussion we decided that Comrade Varga's conception is correct, but we put the statement still more clearly; we pointed out at the same time the entirely new counter-tendency manifested by the new imperialist advance of America and Great Britain.

The third and most important question was whether the

theses sufficiently expressed the revolutionary perspective. It was the opinion of the whole commission that we would have to express ourselves a little more concretely on some points than was done in the original draft of the theses.

The last question that we discussed was the question of what had taken place since the Third World Congress—had the situation become more acute or had it remained the same. We concluded that the decay of capitalist world economy in certain capitalist countries had increased considerably. I wish to state that Comrade Varga's theses served as an excellent basis for our conception on the whole economic world situation. But we must also state that the efforts of certain German comrades contributed in many ways in formulation the theses more concretely and clearly, and especially in presenting the revolutionary perspective more concretely and sharply.

It seems that the well-known criticism of Comrade Boris is the only criticism of the theses formulated by Comrade Varga and the German delegation. The theses now represents the unanimous opinion of the whole Political Commission, from Comrade Varga to the comrades of the German delegation. These theses show that there is nothing in common between the conceptions of the German delegation and of Comrade Boris.

**Thalmann (Germany):** Comrades, the Political Commission must adopt a standpoint toward two guiding principles in the question of tactics, one of which was proposed by the Russian Party and the other by Bordiga. The Sub-Commission, which decided to adopt the draft of the Russian Party as a basis for discussion of the guiding principles in the question of tactics, declares that on various points, which played a part in the discussion, the theses of the Russian Party closely approached the theses proposed by Bordiga. In estimating the international situation; in the discussion of the problems of power; the principles for the creation of

Communist parties, the united front, the workers' government; partial demands; the Bolshevisation of the parties, and the concrete tasks of the most important sections of the C.I.—in all these, even to the consideration of special questions, there existed a general, harmonious opinion.

**Bordiga:** The Italian left, although not in agreement with it will vote for Zinoviev's draft because it is an advance on the resolution of the Fourth Congress. Moreover, the reservations are only concerned with certain formulae connected with the united front, the workers' government and a few secondary questions. The condemnation of "ultra-left" digressions does not by any means concern opposition, which have the genuine support of the Italian left.

The theses proposed by the political commission on the economic world situation were unanimously accepted by the Congress.\*

**Bukharin:** The work the Programme Commission has accomplished is as follows: The Programme Commission, the special sub-commission, and the smaller commissions, have adopted certain amendments. But these amendments on the whole are of a secondary nature.

The majority of the delegations were in agreement on our platform. But it must still be improved in style. Therefore, comrades, I propose that the following resolution be adapted.

1. "The Congress adopts the draft prepared by the Programme Commission as the basis for the discussion in the sections.

2. "A Drafting Commission will undertake to edit the draft in accordance with the decisions of the Commission.

3. "The Congress determines that a permanent Programme

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\* All the resolutions adopted at the Congress will be published in a special volume.



Commission be set up by the Executive, which will, as quickly as possible, publish the draft and the necessary explanatory material to lead the international discussion and to evaluate it.

4. "The Congress will assume the task of formulating the final draft."

Thus we propose that two Commissions be formed; one which is, to put the draft into the proper style as quickly as possible. I believe that the Commission can be elected immediately by the Congress. We propose the following as nominees:

The two co-authors of the basic work—Bukharin and Thalheimer, and the representative of the German Delegation.

With regard to the second and more permanent commission, I believe that it should be elected by the Enlarged Executive.

I close in the hope that before the next Congress meets, all the sections will have stated their standpoint in connection with the draft. We now have a basis for consideration, and all the sections must discuss this question.

Both of Comrade Bukharin's proposals were unanimously adapted.

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## REPORT OF ITALIAN COMMISSION.

**Manuilsky:** The Italian Commission arrived at an unanimous decision on a programme of action for the Italian Communist Party. This programme was rejected by the Italian left.

The International must issue a declaration to the working class to show it the absolute necessity of fusion between the Communist Party and the pro-Third International fraction of

the Maximalist Party.

The International must also condemn in very strong terms the refusal of the left to enter into the leading organs of the Communist Party. This third document will be elaborated and voted upon by the Enlarged Executive. The tendency which calls itself a left tendency is in reality a tendency of abstraction from action, and must be criticised as a tendency inimical to the interests of the revolution. According to the unanimous decision of the Commission, the solution of the Italian crisis will depend mainly on the attitude of the left.

I hope that we will arrive not at a submission *pro-forma* but at sincere determination to put into practice the resolutions which were passed.

**Ercoli:** The centre of the Italian Communist Party agrees with the political programme elaborated by the Italian Commission. But it is of the opinion that the capture of the socialist masses should be no longer conducted on the field on which the actions of the International have hitherto taken place, but on the field imposed by the political crisis with which we are faced to-day. The centre also demands that the Congress should vote for the inclusion of the pro-Third Internationalists into the Political Bureau of the Party.

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## REPORT OF ENGLISH COMMISSION.

**Comrade Ruth Fischer** reported for the English Commission. She said: Comrades, it will take me but a minute to make my report. I must state that the English Commission succeeded in drafting a comprehensive resolution on the tactics with regard to the Labour Government and the practical tasks

in connection with the Labour Party which we hope will not remain a scrap of paper, but will be a real beginning in the progress of good work in England. A separate passage has been inserted in the paragraph dealing with Germany, France, and Czecho-Slovakia. We are all convinced that the British movement is of the greatest importance to the Communist International and we all hope that the attention which the Communist International has given to the British movement will contribute to a revolutionary mass Communist movement commencing in England.

The resolution of the English Commission was carried unanimously.

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## REPORT OF AGRARIAN COMMISSION.

**Kolarov:** The Agrarian Commission unanimously adopted the draft resolution. We must add only the following amendment to paragraph 5.

“Communist Parties must pay special attention to the organisation of agricultural labourers.”

The Russian Commission has also unanimously accepted the draft resolution, with some slight alterations in the wording.

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## REPORT OF TRADE UNION COMMISSION.

**Stanislavsky (Poland):** In the name of the Polish, French, English, American, Russian and Balkan delegations, I propose

the following resolution:

“The Fifth Congress of the Communist International endorses the thesis on the trade union question, proposed by Comrade Losovsky. The Congress transfers these theses for final drafting to a commission composed of Comrades Losovsky, Radetsky, Samov, Dunne, Kohn, one English, one Polish, one Italian, and one Balkan comrade whom the respective delegations will appoint.

The Fifth Congress transfers to the Enlarged Executive the fourth section of the thesis, questions dealt with at the Vienna Congress of the International Trade Union Federation, with the instruction to examine the question thoroughly and to draw up the required instructions.”

Then came the following resolution:

“The Fifth Congress of the Communist International declares that the position of Comrade Shumacher and other comrades on the trade union question and their activity in the trade union movement run contrary to the decisions of the Communist International. The Fifth Congress condemns as harmful to the revolution such opposition, and activity which leads to abandoning the trade unions demands the splitting up of the trade union movement in Germany. The Fifth Congress calls upon all those who have left the unions to return and generally calls upon workers to join unions. The Fifth Congress asserts that the trade unions are the rallying ground of all the exploited on which the Communists must conduct their educational and propagandist activity. The abandonment of the trade unions implies desertion from the revolution and co-operation with the enemies of the proletariat.”

**Comrade Gebhardt:** The German delegation makes the following declaration all point 4 of the Trade Union Resolution:

The German delegation considers the time inopportune for

the steps which have been suggested. The German delegation thinks that the masses must be widely prepared and enlightened upon this question before the success of these steps could be anticipated. Nevertheless the German delegation agrees to submit this question to the Enlarged Executive, hoping that it will take due consideration of the standpoint of the German delegation and that the proposal will be carried out by the Executive on the basis of real conviction, and not of mere discipline.

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## REPORT OF YOUTH COMMISSION.

**Thalmann:** The draft resolution of the Youth Commission dealt especially with the active work of the youth in the army and in military organisations, with the practical preparation for the tasks in connection with civil war, and with the work in connection with the factory nuclei. It became dear that in the factories the Communist Party has not yet realised the necessity of supporting the youth in their stand on anti-militarism. In Sweden the Party opposed the youth because the youth wished the Party to live up to the decisions of the World Congress. In Czecho-Slovakia, the Party did not realise that the factory nuclei are indispensable to the proletarian revolution. The youth, on the other hand, who wanted to do factory nuclei work, were left in the lurch by the older members. The Youth Commission desires that the Congress declare that the parties must show more interest in the practical work of the youth—for preparation for armed uprising.

The resolution was unanimously adapted.

Bukharin and Thalmann were appointed to deliver greetings to the Third Congress of the R.I.L.U. at its opening

session.

Comrade Zkhakaia, on behalf of the Georgian comrades, protested against the assertions of the Georgian Mensheviks Jordania and Tcheidze that the Soviet power in Georgia would be overthrown by an armed revolution. He branded the Georgian Mensheviks as the agents of Entente capital, who were paid by the imperialists for their campaign of vilification against the Soviet Government. He recalled the fact that the Georgian Mensheviks had retarded the revolutionary movement, not only during the last seven years, but also throughout the revolutionary struggle, and that they finally fled the country, carrying off with them a vast amount of money and valuables, which they are now using for financing the anti-Bolshevist committee abroad. Zkhakaia concluded by appealing to the Communist International, and to all comrades to join in this protest.

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## REPORT OF NORWEGIAN COMMISSION.

**Bukharin:** We know that after the split in the Norwegian Party, the great fights in Norway ended in the total bankruptcy of the Tranmaelites. Among the Tranmael followers a strong current is noticeable for a return to the Comintern. Apart from the leaders of this Party there are fairly sound proletarian elements which will fight their way back to the Comintern in spite of the resistance of their leaders. The Social-Democratic and partly syndicalist orientation of such leaders as Tranmael was unmasked during the great fights which occurred in the Norwegian Labour movement. Our Party, notwithstanding the defeats sustained by the movement as a whole, has acquired great prestige. Our Party is young, but it has already shown its

ability to hold its own in real fights. The situation is such that we must make use of the present state of affairs to continue along the line of winning sympathies of even greater masses of Norwegian workers.

On behalf of the Russian, German and French delegations, I submit to the Fifth World Congress the following resolution.

“The anti-Communist attitude of the present leaders of the Norwegian Labour Party has prevented this Party from affiliating with the Communist International. The Fifth Congress is aware of the fact that in this Party there are honest revolutionary proletarian elements who wish and must adhere to the Comintern.

The Fifth World Congress instructs the Executive to do everything possible to win the real proletarian, revolutionary elements of this Party for the Communist International.”

The resolution was carried unanimously.

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## **PROTEST OF EGYPTIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.**

Stewart (England): Under the government of Zaghlul Pasha in Egypt in the month of March of this year, eleven of our Communist comrades were arrested and have been held in prison since that date. They are charged under a whole variety of statutes, eleven in number, with criminal intentions to upset the government of Egypt, etc. I will read you only one sentence from the charges:

“They demanded the overthrow of the king as the basis of the constitution and replacing it with a Communist society, declaring that the best results will ensue from the realisation of their intentions. With this purpose they formed a party called

the 'Egyptian Communist Party, Section of the Communist International,' whose conditions they accepted. The party acts according to the instructions of the International which are directed towards overthrowing the king and the confiscation of private property by threats and force. They carried on all forms of propaganda among the workers, small farmers, etc., thus perpetrating crimes punishable according to statutes."

We wish that the Fifth Congress shall endorse the protest of the Egyptian Communist Party, but we desire that very much more than a mere endorsement of that protest should ensue. We desire that the sections of the Communist International shall make the question of the arrest and continued imprisonment of our comrades a real live issue, and that in all the countries wherever it is possible not only to make petitions, but to stage demonstrations against the Egyptian consulates.

In the name of the Presidium, I ask that the Congress of the Communist International adopt this resolution and take the necessary steps to see that the resolution is carried out throughout the world.

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## ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE.

Comrade Zinoviev was unanimously elected as chairman of the Executive amid applause which lasted for several minutes.

The newly-elected Executive consists of the following comrades.

Belgium: Jacquemotte.

Bulgaria: Kolarov; candidate: Dimitrov.

China: Tchen Du Sin.



Germany: Geschke, Schlecht, Rosenberg: candidates, Robert, Ruth Fischer, Thalmann.

Great Britain: Pollitt, MacManus; candidates: Stewart, Gallacher.

Finland and other Border States; Kuusinen; candidate: Miyeitch.

France: Semard, Trient, Sellier; candidates: Guy Terrain, Suzanne Giraud, Doriot.

Holland: Wynkoop.

India: Roy.

Ireland: Candidate: Larkin.

Italy: Bordiga, Ercoli; candidates: Marco, Rienzi, Maffi.

Japan: Katayama.

Java: Samauen.

Youth International: Vuyovitch, Schueller, Hessen.

Yugoslavia: Boschkovitz, Marinowitz; candidate:

Simitsch. Latin America: Penelou.

Norway: Schefflo; candidate: Hansen.

Austria: Fiala.

Poland: Grzegorzewski; candidates: Bogutski, Nedobytny.

Rumania: Christesco.

Sweden: Hoeglund, Chilbum; candidate: Samoelson.

Spain: Perez, Solis.

Czecho-Slovakia: Neurath, Smeral, Muna: candidates, Vercik, Dobrowolny, Sapotocki.

Ukraine: Manuilsky, Frunze.

U.S.S.R.: Zinoviev, Bukharin, Stalin, Kamenev, Rykov; candidates: Sokolnikov, Trotsky, Losovsky, Piatnitsky.

United States: 2 comrades; candidate: Dunne.

Personal: Clara Zetkin; candidate: Bela Kun.

The seat of the Executive: Moscow.

After the elections, the representatives of a great number of delegations from the workers of Moscow, Leningrad, and other districts, as well as from the peasantry from various regions of

the Soviet Union greeted the Congress and presented banners and symbolic gifts to the delegations of the German, French, British, American, Indian and Italian proletariat.

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### **Closing Speech by Comrade Zinoviev.**

Comrades: The sentimental side of our conferences should not be underestimated. To-day in this hall I saw many old workers from Russia, Germany, and other countries, who have probably passed through many a severe struggle, and who could not suppress a tear at to-day's scene of fraternisation. I believe, comrades, that these delegations from the various factories, from the various branches of industry, from the various quarters of the city, and from the different centres of the Labour movement, have met to-day by no mere chance. This is the very nature of the Third International, such as it is and should be. Such scenes of fraternisation, and such sentiments, are simply impossible in the Second International. It is the Third International as we know it and as longed for and wished it to be. One of the simplest workers—I believe he was even a non-party worker—said to-day (I regret that he spoke in Russian and not everyone understood him): “Follow in the footsteps of Lenin; he has welded together the Bolshevik party so that it now represents a solid block.”

I believe, comrades, that at this Congress, regardless of all the defects and shortcomings it was our desire to become, solidly welded, and I believe: we have welded our International as we have been taught by Lenin, and as the interests of the working class requires it to be. And this, comrades, I believe to be the most important. It is not a great misfortune if we commit one mistake or another, this we shall put right presently. The

experiences of the international Labour movement will help us to put things right. The most important fact is that our International is not like the Second International, “a body without a soul” as Max Adler described it. The most important thing is that we are becoming welded together, that we put our soul into the work, and that we speak to the very soul of the fighting working class, such as it is, with all its weak and strong points. This is the most important fact. And I believe, comrades, that we have honestly exerted our efforts in this direction.

Another of the non-party comrades in a few words summed up the feelings of the Russian working class. He said “We, the Russian workers used to be in a very difficult position; we had to fight with out revolvers against the heaviest guns in the most difficult situations; we now watch with the utmost attention the fighting working class throughout the world. Whenever we find our comrades in other countries gaining the upper hand over the bourgeoisie even for a short while, we are overwhelmed with joy. Whenever we see the reverse, the bourgeoisie on top, the Russian workers sink their heads; but we are firmly and profoundly convinced that, the final victory will be yours and ours in the long run.” Could a simpler and more telling expression be found to voice the real feelings of international solidarity which animate the Russian working class and the best elements of the working class throughout the world, than the one that was used by this simple non-party worker?

What are the net results of our Congress? I believe, the most important fact is that we have come together after eighteen months of most ruthless reaction. We all felt that our forces had not been broken, that our forces had grown.

Secondly, our work was the work of crystallising our tactics, particularly the tactics of the united front, coupled with a purging of all opportunist deviations. This is an important

achievement. We have cleaned our weapons, and we should keep them clean by applying the tactics of Communism in a manner that will ensure the ultimate victory.

Our third achievement was the attitude taken by the Comintern towards the phase of so-called democratic pacifism. We had to visualise the international situation so that we should not rush blindly to the battlefield, so that our leadership, the head and brain of the working class, might fulfil its historic mission.

Our fourth and most important achievement is the Bolshevisation of the Party. This was the express slogan of the Fifth World Congress. It is the slogan which is going to be of supreme importance for many months, nay for many years to come. To be sure, we are all possessed of the good-will to become real Bolshevik parties, but we are at time affronted with tremendous difficulties. There are such wide differences in the respective traditions of the Labour movement in the different countries. Opportunism is still deeply rooted in some sections of our movement: I mean the survivals of bourgeois ideology in our ranks. It is not a question evil intention but of the milieu in which we live. We live and breathe in the bourgeois society, hence the remnants of bourgeois ideology, that is, of opportunism.

The fifth feature was the confirmation of the slogan: "To the masses." It seems such a simple thing, it sounds so elementary, nevertheless it is one of the most important of all our past slogans. This slogan we have amplified into the slogan: "Into the masses, on the road towards the Bolshevisation of the Party."

This was the most important message of this Congress. We must make this slogan clear to the workers throughout the world. According to statistics, 44 per cent. of the delegates to this Congress are workers. An International Congress represents the very cream of the Communist Party. And if at

this International Communist Congress we have 44 per cent. workers (not to speak of the Russian delegation, in which the percentage would prove even higher), it is not quite enough, to be sure, nevertheless, it accords a good indication of the political physiognomy of the Comintern. We must raise new leaders from among the masses. No one can lead the international working class to victory better than the working class itself, than the best elements of the working class from the factories, who must be drawn into the leadership, with all their weaknesses, and for some time even with all their prejudices. We need the iron fist of the real workers as we know them, of the real class which has the historic mission of overthrowing the bourgeoisie.

This is the road on which we will continue our course. We shall insist on having the greatest possible number of real workers installed in the leadership of all the Communist parties, so that a fresh breeze might blow into the central organisations of our parties, wherever that be necessary. We are growing in different ways. We grow through the youth organisations, as we have already said at this Congress; we grow through the Trade Union International; we shall now gain new force through the Peasants' International, which is not a pure Communist organisation, but gathers all the revolutionary elements of the peasantry.

I would like to conclude by referring more to the demonstration week of the 10th anniversary of the outbreak of the World War. We all want to be Leninists. The teaching of Leninism on the subject of war is an important part of the whole doctrine of Leninism. I am not going to give here an exposition of the doctrine, but you know that it has become an international current. It is now our first opportunity to show our earnest desire to become an International Leninist Party. We shall now: measure the real successes of our parties by their achievements in the demonstration week against war and in

their hostilities against the bourgeoisie and the counter revolutionary leaders of the social-democratic parties. I trust that all of you, on returning to your several homes, will exert your utmost efforts to carry out these demonstrations on an international scale, so that they might be turned into grand demonstration for the Communist International.

## **Report of Enlarged Executive Committee**

Zinoviev opened the session. At his suggestion, the Presidium of the Congress will control the discussions. The first point on the Agenda was:

### **The Italian Question.**

Manuilsky reported for the Commission. As a basis for its work the Commission used the programme of action adopted by the Congress. The proposals on fusion, were unanimously accepted by the Commission and by the Italian delegation; the comrades of the Left, of course, making some reservations. The proposals for the personnel of the leading party organs in Italy constitute a serious interference in internal party affairs. But it had to be done because all the fractions of the C.P.I. demanded a solution by the Commission in every detail of this question. Thus the Commission had to decide about the resignation of the four comrades of the Left who had belonged to the Central Committee of the Party. Such resignations, according to our statutes and decisions of the World Congress, are absolutely inadmissible. But since the comrades of the Left explained that they would co-operate in a disciplined manner in carrying out the resolutions of the Congress, the Commission believed it could dispense with a strict application of the statutory provisions. The Commission noted the resignations, or rather, that the list of the new Central Committee did not contain a member of the Left. According to the proposal of the Commission, the Central Committee is to consist of nine members of the Centre, four members of the so-called Right,

and four of the Third Internationalists. That is not an ideal solution of the problem, but in view of the attitude of the Left it must needs be accepted. The Presidium must be commissioned to draw up the letter to the Italian Party. It must also draw up the manifesto to be addressed to the Italian workers when the fusion is consummated.

It must be stated that the solution of the Italian crisis depends in the last analysis on the attitude the extreme Left will adopt towards these decisions. You have heard the declaration of Comrade Bordiga at the Congress; I believe it was a loyal declaration. We hope that the Left fraction legally carries out the decisions of the commission and of the Enlarged Executive. All the proposals were adopted with the agreement of the Italian delegation. It is necessary that all the fractions of the Italian delegation now pledge themselves to support the decisions of the commission which are being adopted by the Enlarged Executive.

**Bordiga:** There still exist certain differences of opinion between the Left and the Communist Party of Italy, on the one hand and the rest of the fractions or the Italian Party and the Communist International on the other. In view of this situation the resolution proposed by Manuilsky seems to us to be the best which can be adopted. For this reason we are adopting the resolution with all its practical consequences not only because it is our disciplinary duty, but because that is a solution which we were not compelled to accept, but which indeed, we ourselves requested. We believe, that for the purpose of checking all fractional disputes and bringing about active co-operation of all groups under the leadership of the Communist International the best policy is to exclude the Left from the leadership of the Party.

I repeat: we will not only subject ourselves to the decisions of the International and of the Enlarged Executive—it is our



disciplinary duty, but actively participate in carrying them out and do everything we can to persuade every comrade who belongs to our tendency to adopt the same loyal attitude.

Rienzi asked the reporter whether the decision with reference to the composition of the Central Committee referred to the one to be elected at the next Party Congress or also to one holding office up to the next Congress. He declared that his group will unreservedly accept the decisions to be adopted, which are fully in harmony with the attitude the group has hitherto held.

**Ercoli:** The Centre adopts the resolution and will do everything necessary to carry it out completely.

Manuilsky: The decisions with reference to the composition of the Central Committee refer to the Central Committee which will prepare for the Party Congress. The composition of the next Central Committee will probably contain the same proportion of elements, but naturally the International will solve this question in conjunction with the C.P.I.

**Geschke:** Since no one else wishes to speak, we will take the vote:

**The proposals of the Commission were adopted.**

### **The Japanese Question:**

MacManus: The Commission was so handicapped by various circumstances that we must request to be allowed to turn the Japanese Question over to the Presidium.

The proposal was adopted.

## **The Austrian Question.**

Kung proposed a resolution which was adopted after brief debate.

## **The Bulgarian Question.**

Smeral submitted the resolution drawn up by the Commission. It was unanimously adopted.

## **The Polish Question.**

**Mizkiovich:** The Commission for the Polish Question recorded that the Central Committee of the C.P. of Poland, through its leaders, Comrades Warsky, Kotschewa and Waletzky, supported right digressions in the Communist International. These opportunist digressions were detected not only in connection with the discussion in the C.P.P. and with the C.P. of Germany, but also in internal party work. The Central Committee of the C.P. of Poland was not in a position to take advantage of the revolutionary movement which undoubtedly exists in Poland and to develop the necessary revolutionary initiative. Moreover, the Central Committee excluded the opposition, which actually represents the conceptions of the Communist International, from party work, and systematically suppressed it. On this account the Commission unanimously adopted the resolution we are submitting, and requests that it be endorsed.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

## **The Propaganda Theses.**

**Geschke:** The next point is the propaganda theses. Since they were adopted unanimously by the Commission, we might as well vote on them at once. There is no objections raised; the theses are adopted.

## **The Sportinern Question.**

The resolution on the question of the physical training of the working class was adopted without debate.

## **The Hungarian Question.**

**Bela Kun:** The two Hungarian fractions have reached all agreement without mediation. We have unanimously adopted the political, tactical, and organisational theses. We request you to appoint a commission to examine these theses and to adopt various organisational measures. We propose that the commission be composed of Comrades Kuusinen, Andreyev, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia, and Piatnitsky.

This noted was adopted.

## **The Negro Question.**

Manuilsky proposed that the final formulation of the resolution on the Negro Question, like the resolutions on the national and colonial questions, he referred to the Presidium. Moreover, he requested that a permanent Negro Commission

be set up in the Comintern, composed of one member of each of the British, Belgian and French Parties and of the Executive, to organise propaganda among the Negroes.

**Geschke:** In connection with Comrade Manuilsky's proposal, I recommend that the national question and that of the revolutionary movement in the East also be referred to the Presidium and that we instruct the Presidium to set up a permanent commission for dealing with these questions, and that the representative of the American Party be appointed chairman of this commission.

No objection was made and the matter was unanimously agreed to in this way.

### **The Question of Fascism.**

Freimuth submitted the resolution adopted by the commission and proposed that it be turned over to the Presidium for final formulation.

**Geschke:** The resolution, since there is no discussion against it, will be referred to the Presidium, or rather the Editorial Commission, for final.

I wish to announce that there is still to be submitted a resolution on the Enlarged Executive.

I wish to announce that there is still to be submitted a resolution on the *Women's Question*. This resolution will be drawn up by the International Women's Conference and then submitted to the Presidium. The Presidium requests authority to publish this resolution in the name of the Executive.

Since there was no objection, the matter was settled.

Then there is still the resolution on the *question of the Intellectuals*. I believe we might' as well refer this resolution to

the Presidium also, with the request that it be published in the name of the Executive.

The suggestion was adopted.

## **Unity in the Trade Union Movement.**

Zinoviev dealt with the differences of opinion which had revealed themselves in the discussion on the question of the unity of the international trade union movement. They were almost all removed. Emphasis must be placed upon the preparation of the masses. "The Conference rejected the united front from above. Upon this we insist absolutely. Any opposite tendencies which may arise will be in direct contradiction to the Fifth Congress. We are opposed to the united front from above alone: we are in favour of the united front from below, and acquiesce in negotiations among the leaders if undertaken simultaneously with the essential preparation from below which is absolutely necessary to ensure success. In that respect we admit the German comrades are right. This main thing is the pressure of the masses, the preparation of the masses."

Comrade Zinoviev summarised the results of the discussion in a resolution which contains the following points:

1. The Enlarged Executive is in principle in favour of the fusion of the two trade union internationals under certain conditions.

2. The fusion of the two internationals will be possible only when this question is made the central point of the attention of the working class masses, i.e., when a real movement from below become possible.

3. In this connection it is necessary to start an extensive international campaign, principally in the name of the Comintern and Profintern in favour of the idea of the unity of the trade union movement. The manifesto of Comintern and

Profintern should be adopted.”

The resolution goes on to deal with the preparation of the various forms of the campaign for international trade union unity. Comrade Zinoviev bluntly denied the possibility of the Russian trade unions adopting independent tactics. “There can be no question of this. The Russian trade unions are a section of the Profintern and they will carry out its tactics. Under no circumstances will they pursue all independent policy. When an opportunity arises, however, the possibility of the Russian trade unions negotiating with Amsterdam must be utilised. This was the case for instance, at the International Transport Workers’ Conference. The leaders, even Fimmen, wanted to negotiate, not with Profintern, but with the Russian Unions. Formally, it was the Russians alone who negotiated, but they were, however, *under the control of an international commission*. The Russian comrades stated at the beginning of the session that they regarded themselves as the representatives of the Profintern.”

In the discussion Comrade Bordiga declared himself opposed to the resolution. In principle he was not opposed to the unity of the trade union movement, but he could not agree with the methods proposed.

The resolution of Comrade Zinoviev, together with the German amendments, was adopted with only one dissident.

A proposal to set up a commission for possible future negotiations was also adopted. The French delegation proposed to insert in the minutes after the words “unity on a world scale” the words “by means of a world unity congress.”

Comrade Semard (France) justified the amendment by the necessity of counteracting manoeuvres of the syndicalists and the reformists who propose to achieve unity by means of fusing the national unions. From this motive alone, we insist in exactitude.

Comrades Heinz and Thaelmann opposed the amendment.

To specify the tactics in this way at the present moment, when the task was to mobilise the masses, would, only create confusion. It would lead to the “united front from above,” which the masses and the congress reject.

After a reply from Comrade Monmousseau (France), Comrade Zinoviev declared that should conditions become favourable, the International would of course, be in favour of summoning a world congress. “We must be quite clear as to why and for what we are preparing the masses.”

Comrade Semard (France), on behalf of the French delegation accepted the declaration made by Comrade Zinoviev.

### **The Souvarine Question.**

**Stewart:** The Commission was concerned first of all with the question of breach of discipline. We had to take into account the political situation of the International at the time the breach of discipline took place, as well as the serious effects it would have if the Communist International neglected to act with the greatest severity against such a flagrant lack of discipline betrayed by a member of the Presidium of the Executive. Souvarine’s letter to the officials of the *Bulletin Communiste* was in itself sufficient cause for expulsion. In justifying himself, Souvarine described the atmosphere which reigned in the French Party at that time. The Commission unanimously adopted the resolution submitted.

Geschke announced that Souvarine, notwithstanding repeated invitations, did not appear at the session.

Guy Jerrame, Ercoli, and Bordiga pleaded for the recognition of extenuating circumstances. The French Party at the time of the dispute with Souvarine, was in a situation in which discipline had somewhat relaxed, and there was a

general indulgence in personal politics. Jerrame also claimed that many of the comrades in France would not understand the expulsion, for neither in the organisation nor in the Central Committee had the request for expulsion been clearly formulated and discussed. Ercoli believed it was necessary to take into consideration the fact that so severe a measure as the one proposed by the commission would be dangerous in view of the fact that Souvarine had until very recently represented the Communist International in France.

Sellier declared that the Souvarine case had been sufficiently discussed in all the organisations. Moreover, the Central Committee had severely censured Souvarine and had expressed its regret that it could not take stronger measures on account of Souvarine's official position in the Presidium of the Communist International. In this connection it had announced its intention of bringing the matter before the International. Souvarine cannot quote extenuating circumstances on his behalf. For months he misused the authority which his position in the Party and in the Communist International gave him, in a most insolent and malicious manner, to act openly and directly against the definite instructions of the Central Committee. That which we could never forgive a worker, we can still less forgive him.

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## **SECOND SESSION OF THE ENLARGED EXECUTIVE (July 13th, 1924.)**

### **The Swedish Question.**

Thaelmann gave a summary of the history of the conflict with the Swedish Party and then discussed the resolution adopted by the Commission. The resolution was unanimously adopted by the commission. Besides the members of the commission, the delegations from the Norwegian and Danish Parties were co-opted to take part, and we took a vote not only of the members of the commission, but also of the members of these two delegations in order to determine what attitude the representatives of the Danish and Norwegian Parties should adopt towards the situation within the Swedish Party. All, with the exception of the Hoeglund group, unanimously agreed with the decisions of the commissions and it was decided to submit this draft to the Enlarged Executive by the entire vote of the members of the commission and the comrades co-opted to the commission.

At the close of the session of the commission, I submitted the question to Comrade Hoeglund whether, in the event of the commission adopting this draft and the Enlarged Executive approving it, he would work in the Swedish Party on the basis of this draft or not. Comrade Hoeglund replied:

“I declare that no one is obliged to do the impossible. In the event of this resolution being adopted, and we believe that it will bring catastrophe to our Party, we cannot pledge ourselves offhand to carry out this resolution. But we will naturally deal very seriously with

this matter in the Central Committee of the Party, and if the whole Central Committee is convinced, that it is possible to continue the leadership of the Party on this basis, I will also carry on the Party leadership with them.”

Thus Hoeglund leaves various loopholes open. We must express ourselves clearly and earnestly—especially for the sake of the federation relations of the three Parties—that things cannot continue in this way in the future. We must at least create political clearness until the Party Conference takes place after the elections, in order that the members become acquainted with the various tactical differences and the attitude of the Party, and so that the resolutions of the Fifth Congress can be enforced within the Party. We believe that, in spite of the threats of Comrade Hoeglund, there is the possibility that the Swedish party can easily overcome even this crisis, because the members, as was proved by the minority in the commission, are already extraordinarily susceptible to the idea of proceeding against the majority in various political questions. And if this draft is adopted here in the Enlarged Executive as our platform, and the re-organisation of the Swedish Party is then undertaken, the very same thing will happen which happened in the German, Polish and French Parties—that 80 to 90 per cent. of the members will adopt the standpoint of the Communist International and the decisions of the Congress.

Hoeglund declared that the majority of the Swedish delegation rejected the resolution of the Commission because it was equivalent to lack of confidence in the present Party leadership. The adoption of this resolution would not be a solution but, on the contrary, an aggravation of the crisis. The speaker claimed that no political or fundamental differences exist within the Party worth mentioning. Outstanding members of the Left had betrayed in various questions the same attitude which the Executive is branding as opportunist. It is true that

there are confused and opportunist tendencies in the Party, but these are in an equal measure in both tendencies. "The present dispute applies only to organisational and personal questions; the dispute is against local and decentralised tendencies within our Party, which are manifesting themselves under the mask of radicalism." The minority did not maintain discipline and thus the Party no longer had a unified leadership. That brought about the necessity of summoning an extraordinary Party Congress. Now we are requested to postpone this Congress. But a decision must be reached before the elections if we are to avoid defeat at the elections. The speaker finally submitted the following counter-proposal:

1. The Executive must emphatically disavow the illegal procedure of the Party minority.

2. The four points submitted by the Central Committee must be endorsed by the Executive.

3. A. unified party leadership must be set up in which an overwhelming majority is allotted to the tendencies which control the majority of the Party, but which includes representatives of the minority.

4. Parliamentary candidatures should be distributed among the two fractions in proportion to their relative strength.

5. The extraordinary Party Congress will be held to approve this decision.

6. This extraordinary Congress must adopt a programme of work for the Party drawn up in agreement with the Executive.

This is our counter-proposal. It is impossible for us to adopt the proposal of the Commission. It is unjust and unwise, it will destroy our election movement, and do serious injury to our Party. It will not Russianise but Austrianise our Party; it will not Bolshevise, but atomise it. This effect will be increased by the reaction on Denmark and Norway. Therefore we demand that the draft submitted by the Commission be rejected and ours adopted.

Samuelson admitted that the minority also has many weaknesses. One of the reasons for this, is that the Party is very badly schooled in Marxism. Hoeglund and Stroem are too little interested in theoretical work and thus both groups in the Party lack theoretical training. The Party dispute is only apparently based on questions of organisation; in reality this struggle, as far as Hoeglund is concerned, is nothing but a continuation of his long consistent fight against the International and against the followers of an unreserved and loyal attitude toward the Communist International and the Executive. Hoeglund refers to his loyalty since the "liquidation" of the Party dispute in Moscow last December, but without justification: the majority of the Central Committee systematically persecutes the comrades who stand on our side. For Hoeglund, there are two kinds of centralism, a national and an international centralism. He uses the national centralism when it serves to discipline the minority and the Youth League, but he himself demands full freedom to recognise international discipline only when it serves his own purpose to do so. The Party Congress can now do nothing but harm, because it is intended as a battleground and not as a workers' congress. It would mean nothing but a sabotage of the election movement: the Party majority naturally has no interest in the re-election of the former representatives. Hoeglund ought to give, once and for all, a clear declaration of his attitude toward the world party.

**Bukharin:** Comrade Samuelson has already proved that the opposition is not so bad as Hoeglund claims it to be. But even if Hoeglund's description were correct, that would be no argument for him. I would mean, on the contrary, that the Party is worth absolutely nothing. For if the Left is really so opportunist, then how extremely opportunist must the Right be? The Swedish Party is in such a situation that the whole experience of the International, and the experiences of all the

Parties, which, thank God, are not so bad as the Swedish Party according to Comrade Hoeglund's description, must be used in order to save the Party. But Hoeglund and the majority of the Central Committee have established a permanent front against the C.I., and thus themselves block the only path leading to salvation. Comrade Hoeglund says we are not yet in a condition to carry out this discipline. We must take into consideration the Scandinavian decentralist traditions. That sounds remarkably like Marxism—we must adjust our tactics to the concrete situation. But are there really such tremendous decentralist tendencies in Sweden? Not at all! Hoeglund himself applies such a strong centralist method that it is a little too much even for us centralists to swallow. He is a super-centralist. The decentralist "traditions" express themselves only against the Communist International. We must formulate the question of centralism in absolutely clear terms. Which is superior—national or international discipline? We must answer this question; otherwise we cannot solve a single organisational question. We believe that should such a conflict exist, the Communist International must support its followers; otherwise there is no International. How can anything be disloyal to the Central Committee of the Party, when the Central Committee is itself disloyal to the Communist International?

The situation in the Swedish Party is a very serious one. The Party majority is opposed by the Youth League, which is one and a half times the size of the Party, and by the most important organisations of the Party—Stockholm, Gothenburg and the Northern Districts. It seems to be a case of half and half. Comrade Hoeglund will some day find himself in a situation similar to Comrade Brandler in Germany, who always assured us that the whole Party was behind him, and then received not one single vote.

We must try to solve this crisis by the co-operation of the

two groups with the assistance of the C.I. Well, all the comrades have heard Comrade Hoeglund's speech. Among other things he said: We followed the policy of the dictatorship of the proletariat; and thus suffered a nice defeat. He says this with his usual melancholy scepticism; we have committed this foolishness, and here you have your result. That brands the spiritual orientation of the Party. Of course, there are situations in which because of an unclear position, groups of non-class consciousness workers are lost to us; but this is merely a proof that the party was incapable of issuing the slogan in such a way as to avoid isolating the masses. But Comrade Hoeglund's speech sounded as though this was a hidden argument against the slogan itself.

We all know Comrade Hoeglund's explanations of Stauning and his disarmament policy, which resulted in such concessions to the Social-Democrats that we found it impossible to adopt them. The most significant lessons for the whole Communist International can be drawn at present from our experiences in connection with the Norwegian Labour Party. Remember, the attitude of Comrade Hoeglund on this question when matters became more and more acute and the split was inevitable! It was stated that the Tranmael group was much more Left than the Scheflo group. But when the conflict came to a crisis, it was the Tranmaelites who adopted Social-Democratic opportunist tendencies. And where was Hoeglund at that time? With Tranmael, of course. Now he can see that our tactic was absolutely correct: in Norway, the Bolshevisation of the Party is proceeding without a hitch.

A new book by Stroem, which has received the complete approval of Hoeglund, furnishes us with lessons on the views which are presented to us as an expression of Scandinavian "peculiarities." This book is petty-bourgeois, idyllic, sentimental and whimpering: certainly not Communistic. And Hoeglund identifies himself with this book. He says: "We are

representatives of small countries where pretty idyllic class conditions exist.” But, comrades, these conditions will not last much longer, and we must prepare ourselves for other relations. Such idyllic conditions also existed in Norway. But after six months of actual fighting, they have already vanished to some extent. Can we remain forever in tactical, political, ideological conditions which suit such idyllic condition? Must we not at last train the workers to a different ideology, which can serve as an instrument in actual battle? It is our duty to effect an ideological re-organisation of the Party. Only in this way can we rescue our Swedish brother party.

Zinoviev declared his willingness to do every thing possible to avoid contributing to Comrade Hoeglund’s humiliation, and proposed that the discussion and the resolution should not be published, but should be distributed only to the Party organisations on condition, however, that guarantees are given that the resolutions will really be carried out.

With regard to the question of the Party Congress we must note that a question of an attempted surprise attack on the Executive arises. There is the decision which is absolutely indispensable, that the national Party Congress must be convoked in agreement with the Executive. The Party Congress is the point around which the whole political life of the Party is concentrated, and it is no more side issue with the Communist International under what conditions a Congress is called and what its agenda is to be. Comrade Hoeglund made a surprise attack on us, and without telling us a word about it, has called a Party Congress. He did this without any urgent necessity, and we cannot hesitate to express the opinion that this was an attempt to convoke the Congress while the vanishing Right majority—which to-morrow no longer be a majority—still exists.

In the party itself both tendencies have betrayed an

unwillingness to hold this Party Congress. There is the feeling that it can bear no good fruit. It can, moreover, easily bring about a very bad situation, even a split.

If the International now unanimously propose the postponement of the Party Congress, what will be its purpose? Does the International wish to humiliate Hoeglund in this way? Not at all. It simply means that the International is trying to do everything possible to save the party unity. That is why it wants no sudden Party Congress and wishes to wait for a more peaceful moment. It also wishes to give the resolutions of the Fifth World Congress the chance to become effective within the Party itself. Why should not its decisions have their effect on the Party before it comes to the question of bend or break? Therefore, we claim that if we postpone the Party Congress, we do this with the sole aim of securing party unity. We say this emphatically to the Hoeglund fraction; and we are sure that a large section of the Hoeglund fraction agrees with us.

With regard to the situation itself: Hoeglund says that Samuelson is compelled to go back as far as 1921 to find fundamental differences. We, however, maintain that as recently as last year, Comrade Hoeglund's position was in flagrant contradiction not only with Samuelson, but with the whole Communist International. Take, for instance, the Norwegian Question. About 50 per cent. of the problems of the Norwegian question were of an international nature: collective membership, Communist Party or melting pot of various tendencies, the religious question, the workers' and peasants' government—all these came up for discussion. In everyone of these questions Hoeglund was clearly opposed to the Communist International. He committed so many breaches of discipline at that time that the most severe measures against him would have been justified. We have already explained in our report why we did not take measures against him at that time. We hoped that by making great personal concessions, we



might convince Comrade Hoeglund. But this was nothing to Hoeglund, but a brief breathing space, during which he could better organise his surprise Party Congress. against the Left element of his party.

Comrade Hoeglund tries to prove that in Sweden the Left also suffer from more or less confusion (pacifism, etc.). Hoeglund keeps a sharp eye on his opponents. He sees, so to speak, the beam in his neighbour's eye without being able to see the mote in his own eye. Comrade Hoeglund may be right in his contention that the Swedish Left is not yet absolutely clear cut and somewhat heterogeneous but it has the advantage of desiring to be honestly Communistic. Communist parties are not developed ready made in one year. We certainly do not demand such a thing in Sweden; but five years have come and gone, and practically every congress has dealt with the Swedish question. The Left has developed the aim more and more clearly to transform the Party into a Communist Party; but the Right includes several conspicuous individuals who are opposed to his development.

Take Comrade Stroem, for instance. He is a good-natured old man, but he is a Social-Democrat. That is perfectly clear. He has just published a book on the Russian revolution; that is not merely a national matter; that is the whole question of the proletarian revolution. He cannot distinguish in this hook between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. He supports Madame Balbanova, who is fighting us in "Avanti." Stroem looks upon us as powerful people to whom one must submit, but one's heart still remains free-hence he identifies himself with Balbanova.

Comrade Hoeglund must decide if he can work together with the cream of the Left—on Communist platform, of course, and not on semi-Social-Democratic platform, not on the platform of the sentimentalities of Stroem and Balbanova. We demand nothing more and nothing less.

With regard to the preparations for the Congress, Comrade Thalmann rightly says that Social-Democratic methods were applied. The great provincial organisation of Göteborg is not to be allowed to have a decisive voice in the Congress because it sends in its contribution irregularly. Hoeglund claims that it is necessary to compel the organisations to pay their contributions regularly. That is true, of course. We must establish our parties on a sound financial basis. Hoeglund is right in insisting that the members pay their contributions. But this is sewing with a white thread—as we say in Russia. In this case it is not a matter of correct principles, but of a petty manoeuvre to gain a few votes. An attempt is being made to deprive a section of the opposition of the opportunity of taking part in the decisions of the Congress. The party cannot flourish with such methods. Uncle Stroem probably thought he was extremely cunning. But he learned that sort of thing from Branting and not from Lenin or from the Communist International. Those are Social-Democratic methods. We must hold a Party Congress where all the representatives will have a voice in the decision after they have heard the opinion of the Comintern.

It cannot be said that we are preceding at a gallop. The whole matter has lasted for years and years. We came to an agreement when Hoeglund supported Tranmael and then threw himself into the arms of the Communist International and the young Norwegian Party. That was recently, in 1923. We must once and for all adopt a clear policy in the Swedish Party. No one wishes to cut Hoeglund off; no one wishes to humiliate him. But we must insist that he join with the Communist elements, and not with doubtful elements.

What would a Tranmaeliade mean in Sweden? Not bolshevisation, but atomisation. Tranmnel was in an advantageous position; he enjoyed the collective support of the trade unions; and still we see to-day that a section of his party

went over to the bourgeoisie, and the other proletarian part is seeking to return to Comintern. In Sweden, on the contrary, we have a small party of about 8,000 members with one-half on our side; we have the Youth League, which is larger than the Party, and which is entirely with us. In this situation there are only two possible roads to follow in Sweden; either the one leading to Branting and the bourgeoisie or to us. The first route is via Stroem-Balbanova; the other is the abandonment of the dispute and the unified leadership of the party on a Communist basis.

Hoeglund quoted a number of cases in which Kilbom and Samuelson committed mistakes with himself. We request him to join these comrades not only on digressive paths, but also on the correct road.

There came a time when we seriously quarrelled with Hoeglund on the religious question. At that time we were compelled to analyse the A.B.C. of communism for him—that we demand of the bourgeois State a neutral attitude on the question of religion, but that we Communists are far from being neutral. That is past and gone. Now we are fighting about such elementary matters: which is superior, national or international discipline? In the sixth year of the existence of the Communist International, we ought to be ashamed to discuss such question.

What is unacceptable in the proposal to postpone the Congress? Why should not the party members first become acquainted with the decisions of the Comintern, and think them over peacefully, before they decide? We do not wish to alter the leadership now; although Hoeglund has the majority; we merely wish to send a representative of the Executive to Sweden to see that the decisions are carried out. The decisions are absolutely correct. We do not wish to humiliate Hoeglund; but we want him to submit if he is in the minority.

We hope that no Tranmael case will arise in Sweden, and

we hope that we will have a good Communist Party in Sweden as well as in the other countries. We proceeded in a similar way in the Polish Party where there also were worthy comrades, such as Warsky, a close friend of Rosa Luxemburg. They did not commit anything like the mistakes that Strem committed, and still the Communist International spoke to them plainly and said: No, that cannot continue any longer. The Polish Party is an earnest Labour party, has the support of large masses, and has already led important revolutionary struggles. In spite of this the International spoke against these comrades, who submitted and no one dreamed of saying that it was a humiliation, that it was unjustified, and what will the Social-Democrats have to say? We have also openly pointed out mistakes to many another comrade. That is our duty as an International.

Therefore, we ask Comrade Hoeglund to abandon his vacillation once and for all, and to submit. He himself admits that pacifist-centrist elements still exist in the Party. We call upon him to join us in the fight against these elements.

**Rossi:** The Italian delegation is convinced that the situation in the Swedish Party is very serious. Even the minority has opportunist elements, and the bolshevisation of the Party must proceed without delay. We accept the resolutions submitted, although we believe they are too weak, because we consider them as the beginnings of the work of bolshevisation. We request Hoeglund and his friends also to accept the resolution; to reject it means that they place themselves outside the International.

**Murphy:** We consider Hoeglund's proposal to hold the Party Congress before the elections unacceptable. Hoeglund must choose between the International and the Social-Democrats. The British delegation will vote for the resolution.

**Kunz:** If things do not improve very quickly in the Swedish Party, then we must proceed with cleansing the party in spite of the danger of a split resulting. The open letter to the Swedish Party must be as strong as possible. Our minimum demand must be the adoption of the resolution.

**Otter Lie:** The majority of the Central Committee of the Swedish Party contributed to the circumstance that Tranmael received a majority at the Norwegian Party Congress. Our delegation has unanimous opinion in judging the Swedish Question. Our desire is not to drive Hoeglund out of the Communist International, but that he should remain with it as a loyal member.

**Treint:** Hoeglund's intervention on behalf of Tranmael was just as inadmissible as the intervention of some German Communist on behalf of Frossard would have been. The Hoeglund case is very similar to the Frossard case.. The speech which Hoeglund made here was the condemnation of his own policy. After the resolution is adopted, Hoeglund should declare that he is ready to support the resolution in Sweden.

**Neurath:** Hoeglund demands of the Executive to adopt a position against the minority of the Swedish Party. Thus he hopes to secure the majority to himself. This attempt will not succeed. The resolution is the very minimum decision which the Executive can entertain.

**Carlson:** The American delegation is in favour of the resolution. But it believes that the Executive has already exercised forbearance too long toward the majority of the Swedish Party. In America we consider the Swedish question to be not a national one, but an international one. The disputes

about Hoeglund, Serrati and Levi received a great deal of attention in the Scandinavian press in our country.

**Boshkovitch:** The Bulgarian delegation intends voting for the resolution. We believe that Hoeglund must conform to the postponement of the Party Congress.

**Lauerson:** The Danish Party is greatly interested in the creation of a unified party movement in Sweden. Therefore, we intend voting for the resolution. We hope that Hoeglund will understand how to take his stand by the principles of the Communist International.

**Sirola:** The Finnish delegation intends voting for the resolution submitted. We are convinced that this decision will greatly accelerate the progress of the Communist movement in Sweden and Finland, and we hope that Hoeglund will join in this progressive development.

**Geschke:** Comrade Treint requested Comrade Hoeglund to make a declaration on the resolution. Comrade Hoeglund himself has already asked for five minutes for rectification. I move that Comrade Hoeglund be granted 10 minutes.

**Hoeglund** refused to speak.

**Thalmann,** in his closing speech, summarised the results of the discussion and then turned to Hoeglund.

If Hoeglund does not yet realise how serious the decision of the Commission is, and refuses to accept the draft, if he does not realise that the decisions of the Comintern have been repeatedly ignored in Sweden, he plainly showed that he has learned nothing and will learn nothing. If Hoeglund does not accept the decisions of the Enlarged Executive, and does not

carry them out, he will tread the same with which other comrades before him have trod. The Swedish Question is an international matter. If such Hoeglund tendencies existed in several other sections, the Communist International and its existence would be menaced. Therefore, we must declare to the Swedish workers and to the international proletariat that such tendencies, as Hoeglund has betrayed must be combated. If Hoeglund declares himself ready to carry out the decisions of the Congress, he remains with us. If not, he will tread the path which leads outside the Comintern. The situation in Sweden demand a firm disciplined Communist Party, led by a comrade who has in him the making of a Communist and still more that of a Communist leader. (Applause.)

Geschke took the vote. The resolution was adopted, two of the Swedish delegation dissenting.

**Geschke:** The French delegation requests Comrade Hoeglund to declare whether or not he intends working for the application of this resolution in Sweden. I ask Comrade Hoeglund whether or not he is willing to make such a declaration.

**Geschke:** Further discussion is inadmissible. The point of the agenda is settled.

## **The Scandinavian Question.**

**Thalmann:** In the Scandinavian Commission we took up a standpoint on the International situation in the Norwegian Party and adopted a draft resolution. Since the commission was unanimous, we recommend the draft to be referred to the Presidium for further formulation of the concrete questions.

Another affair with which the Scandinavian Commission dealt, is the Federation of the Scandinavian Parties. The Commission submits the following resolution to the Enlarged Executive:

“The Enlarged Executive approves of the Federation formed at the Scandinavian Conference in January of Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and Finnish Communist Parties, and emphasises the political necessity of the organisational establishment and the further development of the Federation for the purpose of creating an effective co-operative organ of the affiliated parties to work and fight against the Scandinavian and Finnish bourgeoisie.

“The Enlarged Executive instructs the Org-Bureau to draw up a detailed organisational programme of the Scandinavian Federation within eight days.”

A third proposal, which was unanimously adopted, is that the Executive address a manifesto to the Norwegian workers.

The Commission requests the Enlarged Executive to approve of these three unanimous decisions of the Commission.

The proposals of Comrade Thalmann were unanimously adopted.

The resolution on the *role of the Communist co-operatives* and the duties of Communist co-operators in the present period of proletarian revolution, was unanimously adopted without discussion.

The resolution drawn up by the *Iceland Commission* was referred to the Presidium.

Geschke hereupon closed the session.



**TO READERS OF THIS  
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